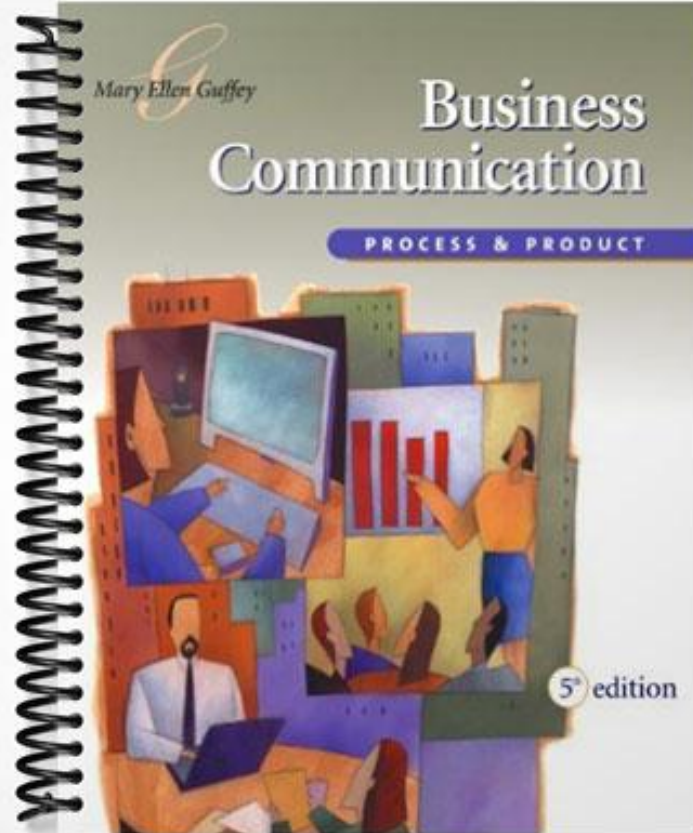


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



Part I

Course Planning Ideas



A POTPOURRI OF TEACHING AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Here are a few suggestions that may prove helpful to you as you begin your business communication course. If you have favorite teaching assignments or ideas that have proved successful, please send them to the author, who compensates for effective suggestions that can be shared with other instructors.

In the Beginning

- Distribute a syllabus on the first day of class. You look professional, and you provide needed information for purchasing books, evaluating course content, and planning study time. Make the syllabus as thorough as possible, including due dates for assignments.
- Do something of value the very first day of class. First-day activities might include making introductions, analyzing communication styles, or completing an in-class writing assignment.
- Prepare a check sheet of all assignments and due dates for the term. Distribute this check sheet to students the first week of class so that they can use it to keep track of their work.
- To help you learn the names of students as quickly as possible, take a digital snapshot of each one on the first day of class. Make a poster with their names below their pictures, and you will be able to learn their names more quickly.
- Encourage your students to write you a memo or e-mail message introducing themselves. (See Activity 1.4, “Getting to Know You.”) In addition to learning about your students as individuals, you will gain insight into their communication skills.
- Form permanent groups near the very beginning of the term. This will allow students to begin working closely with one another, collaborating on assignments, and giving effective feedback.
- Introduce students to the computer lab very early in the term so that students can use technology to help them complete their assignments throughout the semester. Make sure that students have a working e-mail address that they can access from campus.

During the Term

- Strive to start class promptly. Some instructors begin with a short quiz to ensure punctuality. Others use *class starters*, such as motivational quotations, written bloopers, jokes about business communication topics, résumés, or other relevant topics. You might give students extra credit for pertinent class starters that they contribute.
- To maintain maximum interest level, plan to change activities several times during your class period. You may lose your audience if you spend your entire class period lecturing.

- Have students submit as many assignments as possible electronically, via e-mail, as attached files, on class discussion boards, to a class mailing list, and so on. This is how students will be communicating primarily in the workplace, and they need to learn how to do so effectively now.
- Decide on an appropriate method of grading that suits you and your students. Talk to your colleagues to see what has worked for them. You may choose a traditional, behavioral, or criterion-referenced method. Take a look at the evaluation methods outlined in this manual.
- Think about using a color other than red to grade/evaluate students' papers. Your goal is to avoid the appearance of having bled all over their papers. Some students have an adverse reaction to red ink.
- Turn back graded student work as quickly as possible. The sooner work is returned, the sooner students can start applying your suggestions to future assignments.
- Have students regularly edit each other's work in small groups. This allows students to develop their proofreading skills, and they often learn a great deal from critically reading the work of others.
- Require students to submit rough drafts of all writing assignments. After they have received feedback from their classmates and from you, they can prepare a stronger final draft. Consider grading only the final draft, which motivates students and allows them to see measurable improvements in their writing.
- Use real-world examples as much as possible to illustrate your points. Encourage students to bring in their own real-world examples to share with the class, including newspaper articles, messages they have received at work, and so on. Students can be a great resource!
- Consider recording your evaluation comments on audio tapes that each student has supplied. Some instructors feel that they save time by not having to write comments on students' papers.
- Encourage students to write their names on the backs of their assignments. Not seeing the student's name enables you to grade the assignment objectively. You have no expectation of what that student "should" have written or earned as a grade. Only when you are ready to record a grade, should you turn over the sheet and identify the writer.
- Consider returning students' papers in individually labeled folders. This will allow you to keep each person's work organized and to return papers confidentially. This folder could also contain a grade record sheet on which students record their grades and track their progress.
- Create a class mailing list so that students can communicate with you and with one another between class meetings. You will find many mailing list activities in Part II of this instructor's manual to help you use the mailing list effectively.
- Create a class discussion board so that students can communicate with you and with one another asynchronously between class meetings. You will find many discussion board activities in Part II of this instructor's manual to help you use the discussion board effectively.

Near the End

- Learn whether your students would be interested in competing for awards and recognition. You might ask this as one of the questions to be answered in their introduction memos at the beginning of the term. Certificates of excellence could be awarded for the highest writing average, highest test average, best oral presentation, and so forth. Such certificates can be an impressive addition to an employment portfolio and résumé.
- Get feedback from students. Find out what they really liked about the course. Find out what they suggest for making it better. You can learn a lot from student feedback to make future classes even stronger. Check out Activity 16.20 in Chapter 16. It asks students to write a letter to an employer (real or imaginary) who paid tuition for this course. Students are to explain how this course made them more valuable to the organization.

As an instructor of business communication, consider joining the Association for Business Communication. This professional organization provides two publications with excellent articles, and it sponsors regional and international meetings where practical research and teaching methodologies are presented in top-notch sessions. For more information write to Dr. Robert J. Myers, Association for Business Communication, Department of Communication Studies, Baruch College, B8-240, One Bernard Baruch Way, New York, NY 10010. You can also visit the ABC Web site at <http://www.businesscommunication.org/>.



POSSIBLE CLASS SCHEDULES

Veteran instructors realize that they cannot in one course cover everything that students need to learn about business communication. Instead, they focus on those topics they consider most important. Your objectives and the length of your course will determine how much time you can spend on various topics. Naturally, the focus and depth of coverage for a 10-week course stressing business correspondence will be different from that of a 16-week course that includes oral reports, written reports, plus business correspondence. We present a variety of possible class schedules, all of which include time for testing. These schedules are meant to provide guidance; they are easily altered to fit your objectives.

10-Week Course

Business Correspondence and Employment Communication

Four 50-minute class meetings a week (40 class meetings)

For a 10-week course stressing business correspondence, you might elect to cover Chapters 1–11 and Chapter 16, while assigning Chapters 12–15 for reading only. If students have weak language arts skills, you may want to include more than one class period to review the C.L.U.E. program. The following schedule allows time for students to become proficient in writing e-mail messages, memos, letters, résumés, and cover letters. To include business reports or oral presentations, reduce the time spent on Chapters 1 through 4.

Class Meeting	Chapter	Topic
1		Class orientation and introduction
2	C.L.U.E.	Review, practice, discussion
3	Chapter 1	Communicating at Work
4–5	Chapter 2	Communicating in Small Groups and Teams
6–7	Chapter 3	Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication
8–9	Chapter 4	Communicating Across Cultures
10		Review or testing
11–12	Chapter 5	Writing Process Phase 1: Analyze, Anticipate, Adapt
13–14	Chapter 6	Writing Process Phase 2: Research, Organize, Compose
15–16	Chapter 7	Writing Process Phase 3: Revise, Proofread, Evaluate
17		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
18–21	Chapter 8	Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos
22–24	Chapter 9	Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages
25–28	Chapter 10	Persuasive and Sales Messages
29–32	Chapter 11	Negative Messages
33		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
34–39	Chapter 16	Employment Communication
40		Review, testing

11-Week Course**Business Correspondence, Short Written Report, and Employment Communication
Three 50-minute class meetings a week (33 total class meetings)**

When a course has only 33 total class meetings (and some of those may be lost to holidays), the course must be streamlined. This schedule covers letters, e-mail, and memos adequately but treats report writing only lightly. Students might be expected to write one or two short reports. If the course is to include oral reporting, then you might reduce or eliminate the time spent on business reports and use that time for Chapter 15, *Speaking With Confidence*.

Class Meeting	Chapter	Topic
1		Class orientation and introduction
2	C.L.U.E.	Review, practice, discussion
3	Chapter 1	Communicating at Work
4-5	Chapter 2	Communicating in Small Groups and Teams
6-7	Chapter 3	Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication
8-9	Chapter 4	Communicating Across Cultures
10		Review or testing
11-12	Chapter 5	Writing Process Phase 1: Analyze, Anticipate, Adapt
13	Chapter 6	Writing Process Phase 2: Research, Organize, Compose
14-15	Chapter 7	Writing Process Phase 3: Revise, Proofread, Evaluate
16		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
17-18	Chapter 8	Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos
19-20	Chapter 9	Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages
21-22	Chapter 10	Persuasive and Sales Messages
23-24	Chapter 11	Negative Messages
25		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
26	Chapter 12	Preparing to Write Business Reports
27	Chapter 13	Organizing and Writing Typical Business Reports
28	Chapter 14	Proposals and Formal Reports
29		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
30-32	Chapter 16	Employment Communication
33		Review, testing

14-Week Course**Business Correspondence, Short Written Report, and Employment Communication
Three 50-minute class meetings a week (42 total class meetings)**

In a 14-week course with a total of 42 class meetings, you could cover letters, e-mail messages, memos, reports, and employment communication. If you prefer, skip written reports and focus on oral reporting. Even if you do not have students write reports, assign those chapters for reading and discussion. The model documents will always be helpful to students now and in their future business careers.

Class Meetings	Chapter	Topic
1		Class orientation and introduction
2	C.L.U.E.	Review, practice, discussion
3	Chapter 1	Communicating at Work
4–5	Chapter 2	Communicating in Small Groups and Teams
6–7	Chapter 3	Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication
8–9	Chapter 4	Communicating Across Cultures
10		Review or testing
11–12	Chapter 5	Writing Process Phase 1: Analyze, Anticipate, Adapt
13–14	Chapter 6	Writing Process Phase 2: Research, Organize, Compose
15–16	Chapter 7	Writing Process Phase 3: Revise, Proofread, Evaluate
17		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
18–20	Chapter 8	Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos
21–23	Chapter 9	Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages
24–26	Chapter 10	Persuasive and Sales Messages
27–29	Chapter 11	Negative Messages
30		Review, testing, or in-class writing assignment
31	Chapter 12	Preparing to Write Business Reports
32–33	Chapter 13	Organizing and Writing Typical Business Reports
34–36	Chapter 14	Proposals and Formal Reports
37	Chapter 15	Submission of short report or proposal
38–41	Chapter 16	Speaking With Confidence (read and discuss)
42		Employment Communication
		Review, testing

16-Week Course

Business Correspondence, Written Reports, and Employment Communication **Three 50-minute class meetings a week (48 total class meetings)**

This 16-week course includes letters, e-mail message, memos, reports, and employment communication, but it does not include oral report delivery. Because report writing generally takes considerable time for research and planning, you will want to have students choose their report topics and begin research early in the course.

Class Meetings	Chapter	Topic
1		Class orientation and introduction
2	C.L.U.E.	Review, practice, discussion
3	Chapter 1	Communicating at Work
4–5	Chapter 2	Communicating in Small Groups and Teams
6–7	Chapter 3	Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication
8–9	Chapter 4	Communicating Across Cultures
10		Test or review

Deadline for choosing written report topic. Research should begin this week.

11–12	Chapter 5	Writing Process Phase 1: Analyze, Anticipate, Adapt
13–14	Chapter 6	Writing Process Phase 2: Research, Organize, Compose
15–16	Chapter 7	Writing Process Phase 3: Revise, Proofread, Evaluate
17		Test, review, or in-class writing assignment

Written report checkpoint regarding research and final topic limitation.

18–20	Chapter 8	Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos
21–23	Chapter 9	Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages
24–26	Chapter 10	Persuasive and Sales Messages
27–29	Chapter 11	Negative Messages
30		Test, review, or in-class writing assignment

Report proposal due.

31–33	Chapter 12	Preparing to Write Business Reports
34–36	Chapter 13	Organizing and Writing Typical Business Reports
37–38	Chapter 14	Proposals and Formal Reports
39		Test, review, or in-class writing assignment
40–41	Chapter 15	Speaking With Confidence
42–47	Chapter 16	Employment Communication
48		Test or review

Submit written report.**16-Week Course****Business Correspondence, Written Reports, and Oral Report Delivery****Three 50-minute class periods a week (48 total class meetings)**

For a 16-week course stressing letters, e-mail messages, memos, reports, and oral report delivery, you should probably omit employment communication—or reduce the time spent on the other topics.

Class Meetings	Chapter	Topic
1		Class orientation and introduction
2	Chapter 1	Communicating at Work
3–4	Chapter 2	Communicating in Small Groups and Teams
5–6	Chapter 3	Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication
7–8	Chapter 4	Communicating Across Cultures
9		Test or review
Deadline for choosing written/oral report topic. Research should begin this week.		
10–11	Chapter 5	Writing Process Phase 1: Analyze, Anticipate, Adapt
12–13	Chapter 6	Writing Process Phase 2: Research, Organize, Compose
14–15	Chapter 7	Writing Process Phase 3: Revise, Proofread, Evaluate
16		Test, review, or in-class writing assignment
Written report checkpoint regarding research and final topic limitation.		
17–18	Chapter 12	Preparing to Write Business Reports
19–20	Chapter 13	Organizing and Writing Typical Business Reports
21–22	Chapter 14	Proposals and Formal Reports
23		Review, test, or in-class writing assignment

Report proposal due.

24–26	Chapter 8	Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos
27–29	Chapter 9	Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages
30–32	Chapter 10	Persuasive and Sales Messages
33–35	Chapter 11	Negative Messages
36		Test, review, or in-class writing assignment
37–38	Chapter 15	Speaking With Confidence
39–41		Oral reports given by students Evaluations done by teacher and peers in class
42–46	Chapter 16	Employment Communication
47		Review requirements for written report
48		Review, testing

Submit written report.



SAMPLE SYLLABUS

The following sample syllabus is provided to help you create your own syllabus. A detailed syllabus with daily assignments such as those shown here is an invaluable aid for students who miss class and also for keeping the class on target to complete its objectives by the end of the course. This sample syllabus places strong emphasis on using technology in the course and introduces technology-based communication tools early in the semester so that students can use them effectively throughout the course.

University of the West Business Division

Syllabus Fall 2006

Course: BUS 250-8288 Business Communications (3 Units)	Telephone: (925) 123-1230, Ext. 123
Meeting Time: Monday 6–8:50 p.m., Room BE210	Fax: (925) 123-1234
Instructor: Professor Jill Awbrey	E-Mail: jawbrey@uow.edu
Office: BE 202E	Web Site: www.uow.edu/jawbrey.htm
Office Hours: Monday: 4:30–6 p.m.; Tuesday: 11 a.m.–12 noon; Wednesday: 4:30–6 p.m.; Thursday: 11 a.m.–12:00 noon; and by appointment	

COURSE OBJECTIVES

BUS 250 is an introductory course designed to help you develop and refine the skills necessary to communicate effectively in a professional business environment. The focus will be on communicating clearly, concisely, considerately, and correctly, both orally and in writing. You will learn to plan, compose, and evaluate business documents, including letters, memos, and business reports; to use technology to communicate, including e-mail and discussion boards; and to prepare and deliver oral presentations. The course will also contain an introduction to employment communication, including résumés, application letters, and interview skills. Emphasis throughout the course will be placed on intercultural communication and the ethics of communication. Teaching/learning methods will include reading, close analysis of business and professional documents, in-class writing and oral exercises, brief lectures, formal writing assignments, group projects, and examinations. Through class meetings and out-of-class work, you should expect to do the following:

1. Understand the process of communication from the positions of “receiver” and “sender” in a variety of business and professional contexts.
2. Apply specific reasoned, practical, and ethical business communication principles to composing and delivering typical business and professional messages.
3. Enhance awareness of communication contexts and practices in other cultures.
4. Practice business communication skills in both independent and collaborative/team situations.

Recommended Prerequisites: BUS 101, eligibility for ENGL 122

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

Course Web Page: <http://www.uow.edu/250main.htm>
Textbook Web Page: <http://guffey.swlearning.com>

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Business Communication: Process & Product, 5th Edition, Mary Ellen Guffey, South-Western, 2006

RECOMMENDED REFERENCES

A standard English dictionary

A manual of source documentation and bibliographic style used in your career field or discipline

A current office reference manual, such as *How 10* or *The Gregg Reference Manual*

REQUIRED SUPPLIES

Internet access

E-mail account

GRADING

You will complete **all** activities for the following **four** modules. Each module will count 25% of your total grade.

Module 1: Business Writing	Prepare a variety of business letters and memos (routine, goodwill, persuasive/sales, negative).
Module 2: Oral Presentations	Give a variety of oral presentations (introduction, persuasive, informative).
Module 3: Using Technology to Communicate	Engage in a variety of activities using technology (e-mail, mailing lists, discussion boards, virtual meetings, personal Web page).
Module 4: Employment Communication	Prepare a variety of employment-related documents (résumés, cover letters, follow-up letters) and engage in a mock interview.

A grade of 90 percent or higher earns an A grade; 80 to 89 percent earns a B grade; 70 to 79 percent earns a C grade; 60 to 69 percent earns a D grade; anything below 60 percent earns an F grade.

GENERAL PROCEDURES**Attendance**

It is important to attend class each day. Lectures and class activities extend your understanding and application of your new skills and knowledge. If you must miss a class meeting, you are responsible for any missed assignments or handouts.

Outside Work

Please plan to devote at least three to four hours per week in addition to class meetings for completing homework assignments, reviewing, composing rough and final drafts, and preparing for the next class session. In order to be prepared for each class meeting, you should complete each homework assignment prior to the following class meeting.

Classroom Rules

- You are expected to arrive for class on time each day.
- All assignments are due on the date indicated.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- Please take advantage of the textbook Web page for extra help with your assignments.
- Show respect for all class members, and relax and have fun!!

Important Dates

September 15: Last day to drop a class without having it appear on your transcript

September 15: Last day for CR/NC option (if you choose this option, you must earn at least a “C” for a CR grade)

November 17: Last day to drop a class (W on transcript)

December 18: Last day of class

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Thorough reading of assigned text segments and supplementary materials.
2. Active, informed participation in class discussions and activities and intellectual engagement at all times.
3. Assignments submitted on time and in appropriate format. All work prepared outside of class must be prepared using a word processor.
4. Regular class attendance except in cases of serious illness or emergency.

ASSIGNMENTS

Week	Chapters/Topics	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction to course	Leadership/Communication Style Analysis Oral Presentation 1 (Introductions) (M2) Homework: Read Chapters 1 and 2; Complete C.L.U.E. Reviews 1 and 2 (check answers to all C.L.U.E. Reviews in back of textbook)
Week 2	1 and 2 Communicating at Work and in Small Groups and Teams	Discuss Chapters 1 and 2 Form Permanent Groups Group Project: Decision Making Homework: Read Xtra! Chapter A (available online at http://guffeyxtra.swlearning.com)
Week 3	Xtra! Chapter A Managing Communication Technology Meet in Computer Lab	Discuss Web Chapter A Introduction to Course Web Page and Computer Lab Print Module Check Sheet Begin Working on Personal Web Page Homework: Take Quick Tour of WebEx to prepare for your virtual meeting.
Week 4	Meet in Computer Lab	Discuss Virtual Meetings Prepare for Virtual Meeting Continue to Work on Personal Web Page Homework: Prepare for Virtual Meeting
Week 5	Class Will Meet Virtually No In-Class Meetings This Week	Take Part in Virtual Meeting (M3) Homework: Read Chapters 3 and 4; Complete C.L.U.E. Reviews 3 and 4; Prepare virtual meeting group report
Week 6	3 and 4 Workplace Listening and Nonverbal Communication Communicating Across Cultures	Submit Virtual Meeting Group Report to Class Mailing List (M3) Discuss Chapters 3 and 4 Homework: Read Chapters 5, 6, and 7; Complete C.L.U.E. Reviews 5, 6, and 7; Complete personal Web page
Week 7	5, 6, and 7 Guffey's 3-x-3 Writing Process: Phase 1 Guffey's 3-x-3 Writing Process: Phase 2 Guffey's 3-x-3 Writing Process: Phase 3	Post Personal Web Page URL to Class Discussion Board (M3) Discuss Chapters 5, 6, and 7 Group Project: Sentence Rewrites Homework: Read Chapter 8; Complete C.L.U.E. Review 8
Week 8	8 Routine E-Mail Messages and Memos	Discuss Chapter 8 Group Project: Writing Routine Memos Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 1 (Rough Draft); Read Chapter 9; Complete C.L.U.E. Review 9

Week	Chapters/Topics	Assignments
Week 9	9 Routine Letters and Goodwill Messages	Discuss Chapter 9 Writing Assignment 1 Due (Rough Draft) (M1) Group Project: Writing Routine Letter Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 2 (Rough Draft); Read Chapter 10; Complete C.L.U.E. Review 10
Week 10	10 Persuasive and Sales Messages	Discuss Chapter 10 Writing Assignment 2 Due (Rough Draft) (M1) Group Project: Writing Persuasive Messages Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 1 (Final Draft); Complete Writing Assignment 3 (Rough Draft); Read Chapter 15
Week 11	15 Speaking With Confidence	Writing Assignment 1 Due (Final Draft) (M1) Writing Assignment 3 Due (Rough Draft) (M1) Discuss Chapter 15 Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 2 (Final Draft); Prepare for Oral Presentation 2
Week 12	10 Persuasive and Sales Messages	Writing Assignment 2 Due (Final Draft) (M1) Oral Presentation 2 (Persuasive) (M2) Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 3 (Final Draft); Read Chapter 11; Complete C.L.U.E. Review 11
Week 13	11 Negative Messages	Writing Assignment 1 Due (Final Draft) (M1) Discuss Chapter 10 Group Project: Writing Negative Messages Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 4 (Rough Draft); Skim Chapters 12, 13, and 14
Week 14	12, 13, and 14 Business Reports Meet in Computer Lab	Writing Assignment 4 Due (Rough Draft) (M1) Select Country/Begin Working on Final Group Presentation Introduction to PowerPoint features Homework: Complete Mailing List/Discussion Board Report; Read Chapter 16; Read Xtra! Chapter B (available online at http://guffeyextra.swlearning.com)
Week 15	16 and Xtra! Chapter B Employment Communication Employment and Other Interviewing	Mailing List/Discussion Board Report Due (M3) Discuss Chapter 16 and Web Chapter B Homework: Complete Writing Assignment 4 (Final Draft). Complete E-Mail Activity
Week 16	16 Employment Communication	E-Mail Activity Due (M3) Writing Assignment 4 Due (Final Draft) (M1) Continue to discuss Chapter 16 Homework: Prepare for Mock Interview. Complete Employment Portfolio

<u>Week</u>	<u>Chapters/Topics</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Week 17	16 Employment Communication	Mock Interviews (M4) Employment Portfolio Due (M4) Homework: Prepare for Oral Presentation 3
Week 18		Oral Presentation 3 (Informative—In Groups, With PowerPoint) (M2)

NOTES

This is a fast-paced, intensive course that will require a lot of outside work and preparation. It will be assumed that you have a good understanding of basic business English grammar and punctuation rules. These will not be covered extensively in class. Please see your instructor as soon as possible if you feel you need extra assistance or would like exercises covering these rules. If you don't feel you have these basic skills, it is strongly advised that you take BUS 101 Business English first.

You should also be aware that proofreading and revision are extremely important when preparing business documents. All writing assignments submitted should be final drafts and of the quality you would feel comfortable submitting to your supervisor. Only error-free documents will receive an "A."

Your instructor reserves the right to make any necessary changes to the above syllabus.



USING THE CHAPTER-OPENING CASE STUDIES

Each chapter opens with an introduction to a case study featuring a premier or significant U.S. company. These studies not only help students learn about real companies and the problems they face, but the case studies also provide a context in which students can place the principles discussed in the chapter. Each case study has three parts. The first part introduces the company, sets the scene, and builds interest. Critical thinking questions enable the instructor to guide class discussion so that students are able to relate the chapter concepts to a specific company. The second part of the case study falls about halfway through a chapter and provides more specific information regarding the company and some communication problem. Additional critical thinking questions require students to analyze what they have learned thus far and apply it to this company. The last segment furnishes more information about a specific problem and sets up an application in which the students help to solve the problem.

Some of the applications require discussion only. Others require students to revise a document or produce a document. Many of the applications can be used for teams or for individuals, thus providing a flexible format for instructors. One instructor assigns each case study to a team of two or three students. The team analyzes the total case, answers the critical thinking questions, solves the application problem (if one is presented), and reports its findings to the class.

All case studies have discussion guides and application solutions. Instructors can find these guides and solutions in Part II of this manual under Chapter Teaching Suggestions.



CHOOSING END-OF-CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The fifth edition of *Business Communication: Process and Product* offers an enormous collection of activities that can be used for in-class discussion and reinforcement as well as for out-of-class assignments. In fact, no other business communication book offers the number or the variety of activities presented in *BC:PP*, 5e. In this edition nearly two thirds of all end-of-chapter activities are new or revised, thus providing instructors with fresh material. Instructors may choose from short, long, easy, and challenging activities. Nearly all activities have discussion guides or solutions provided in this manual. Selected activities are labeled **Web**, **InfoTrac**, **Team**, **Critical Thinking**, **Speaking**, and **E-mail**. These labels help instructors choose activities that develop specific skills.

WEB ACTIVITIES

For those instructors who wish to encourage Web research, we provide a selection of suitable activities for each chapter. To save time and to avoid dead links, we will maintain all Web assignments on a master list at the Guffey student Web site (<http://guffey.swlearning.com>). Students should access each assigned link from the Web site, where the links will be monitored and replaced as needed. This edition now includes specific activities that provide opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills.

WEBTHINK ACTIVITIES

Because the Web has become a primary source of information, it makes sense for business communication classes to make full use of its potential. In addition to end-of-chapter Web assignments, this edition of *BC:PP* includes textual references to exciting Web sites in our WebThink feature. Students extend their knowledge beyond the textbook with visits to selected relevant sites. For example, in Chapter 1 students learn the pros and cons of office cubicles and how to cope in a cubicle environment. They also visit a Web site where they can complete a questionnaire revealing their communication style. All links for WebThink activities may be accessed from the Guffey student Web site, where the links are monitored and updated regularly.

Instructors will find that these Web visits are not merely recreational surfing. Each activity is accompanied by a set of critical thinking questions, guiding students to look for specific information and requiring analysis of what is found. Instructors are provided with answers and discussion material at the Guffey instructor Web site (<http://www.westwords.com/instructor.html> — Password: R4744LP).



DOCUMENTS FOR ANALYSIS

Many chapters contain “Documents for Analysis.” These documents are also available at the Xtra! Web site so that students may edit and revise them without total retyping. Transparency solutions are available in this manual. For distance learning classes, a digital set of solutions is available at the Guffey Instructor Web site.



CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: AN INSTRUCTOR'S EXPECTATIONS

In addition to learning to use effective communication techniques, students must also develop a good work ethic. Establishing classroom etiquette rules and expectations early in the semester can help foster an atmosphere of respect and professionalism. You can have students develop these rules, or you can provide your own. You might also consider including your classroom rules on your course syllabus, as shown on the model syllabus presented earlier. Following are several etiquette rules and expectations you might consider incorporating into your classroom.

1. Please arrive at class on time or before the starting time. Please attend each class unless a good reason prevents it. If you must miss class, please inform your instructor ahead of time, by phone, by e-mail, or in person.
2. Please come to class prepared for the work to be done and in a positive frame of mind so that you are ready to learn. Please complete readings and other assignments on time. Bring all necessary course materials such as paper, pencil, required books, handouts, and notes.
3. Please try to be pleasant and positive in your classroom behavior. Show respect for all class members. Address legitimate grievances appropriately, preferably outside of normal class time. If you have a problem with the instructor, please try to solve the problem with him or her before appealing to a higher authority.
4. When responding to classroom questions, please do not interrupt a fellow student or the instructor. Take your turn. When you respond to another student's comment, please try to acknowledge the other's position. When responding, please try your best to call other class members by name.
5. Please treat the furniture and equipment in the classrooms and computer labs as if it were your own. Leave classrooms and labs as you find them, turning off equipment as necessary and pushing in chairs. Throw any trash away on your way out.
6. Most classes begin on time and end on time. If you need to know about schedule or assignment changes, please ask about them at the beginning of class. If you have a real need to leave early, please inform the teacher and leave quietly.
7. If before a night class, you need to eat, please do so before class, not during it. Please do not bring food and drink into the class if college rules forbid them. Throw away your trash. Under no condition is smoking or other tobacco use acceptable in the classroom.
8. You will do better if you are interested in the class, and the best way to be interested is to get involved. Talk to your friends about the material, and look for current applications or examples about the course issues in newspapers or popular magazines and on the Web. If you can make connections between yourself and the course materials, you will be a happier and a better student.
9. Please come to class appropriately dressed. Unless the room is exceedingly cold, please take off your coat and hat.
10. Most of all, keep in touch with the class syllabus, the instructor, and your classmates. You will do better when you feel you are a real part of the class.



EVALUATING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Evaluating student performance is probably the least appealing aspect of teaching business communication. Although some instructors have developed “The Perfect Plan” for grading and are quite satisfied with it, others are still searching. To help those who are still searching, we present five methods for evaluating student assignments.

Before examining these evaluation methods, you may want to consider these general ideas regarding grading and evaluation.

- Be aware of your goal in evaluation. Is your goal to judge the student’s work and attach a number or letter grade? Or is your goal to help students improve their writing? Probably most of us try, to a certain extent, to accomplish both goals—without making the evaluation task burdensome.
- Keep your grading plan as simple as possible—for your sake and the students’ as well.
- Discuss your grading plan with students before they actually start working on their first graded assignment. Be sure they understand the nuances of your grading method, and explain your pet peeves regarding writing assignments. You may even want to have them submit this first graded assignment, give comments to help them improve it, allow time for revisions, and then have them resubmit it for a grade.
- Strive for objectivity. For example, ask students to write their names on the backs of assignments so that the grade is never influenced by their names.

Revision

Most writing authorities advocate revision as an extremely important technique in developing writing skills. But how should you grade exercises that have been rewritten? Record the first grade? Record the second grade? Record an improvement grade? Some instructors allow students to write rough drafts that are not graded, followed by final versions that are graded. Other instructors allow assignments to be rewritten, assigning a grade no higher than a “C” to the second attempt. Some assign one third of the grade to the rough draft and two thirds to the final version.

You may want to allow students to rewrite a certain number of assignments, which you will totally regrade, reducing the grade on them by one letter. Whatever plan you choose, be sure to schedule deadlines for submitting revisions. Also be sure that your deadlines for rewrites give you ample time to evaluate these papers before the end of your marking period.

Correction Symbols and Comments

Resist the temptation to rewrite faulty student expression. Crossing out a student error and replacing it with a “quick-fix” is not nearly as effective pedagogically as allowing students to solve their own problems. Although comments that encourage problem solving require more time to write than “quick-fixes,” such comments or symbols force students to analyze their writing fault and formulate their own revisions. See Appendix D in *Business Communication: Process and Product* for a list of correction symbols to use when grading papers.

Six Evaluation Methods

Here are six possible methods for evaluating student assignments. They represent traditional, behavioral, holistic, and criterion-based methods.

1. **Assigned-Weights Method.** Each document is graded according to assigned weights. For example, the opening is assigned a weight of 10 points.

Category	Possible Points	Your Score
Opening, closing	10	_____
Strategy, organization	10	_____
Completeness, accuracy	10	_____
Tone, goodwill effect	10	_____
Clarity, coherence	10	_____
Overall effect, originality	20	_____
Mechanics	30	_____
Spelling (-5 pts.)		
Word choice (-5)		
Major error (-6)		
Minor error (-2 or more)		
Idiom, syntax, or other error (-2 to -12)		
Bonus Points		_____
TOTAL POINTS		=====

If you prefer to penalize more (or less) for mechanical errors, change the points deducted. See page 41 for a template using this method.

2. **Dual-Criteria Method.** Each assignment is graded on the basis of the following criteria:

<u>Content (10 pts.)</u>	<u>Grammar/Mechanics (10 pts.)</u>
Strategy	Appearance
Organization	Format
Coherence	Grammar
Tone	Capitalization
Clarity	Spelling
Reader benefit	Word choice
Opening, closing	Conciseness
Overall effectiveness	Writing technique

Every assignment starts out with 20 points. The instructor devises a method of deducting points for faults, for example, -2 for any content fault (or more, depending upon the severity of the fault), -1 for minor grammar/mechanical problems, and -2 for severe grammar/mechanical problems. Numbers may be converted to grades using this optional scale:

A = 18–20 points	C = 8–13 points
B = 14–17 points	D = 4–7 points

3. **Check-Mark Method.** Students may rewrite assignments as often as required to receive a check mark, which usually signifies “B” work. A student’s grade is determined by the number of check-mark assignments completed during the marking period. For further discussion of check mark grading, consult *Teaching Business Communication Two*, edited by George H. Douglas (Urbana, IL: Association for Business Communication), 222.

A = 15 check marks	C = 11–12 check marks
B = 13–14 check marks	D = 9–10 check marks

4. **0, 1, 2 Holistic Method.** Similar to the checkmark method, this holistic method includes only three possible scores. Marilyn Dyrud, Oregon Institute of Technology, developed this plan which she says minimizes student complaints and reduces instructor drudgery. Students may rewrite assignments to improve their grades. For further discussion, see “Preserving Sanity by Simplifying Grading” appearing in *Business Communication Quarterly*, March, 2003, 78. Here is Professor Dyrud’s evaluation criteria for letters and memos:

2 An excellent letter/memo

- is mailable as is (requires no revision)
- follows format specs and assignment requirements
- is signed/initialed
- has no mechanical errors (spelling, punctuation, syntax)
- attends to the audience’s needs
- maintains “you” attitude throughout
- uses positive terminology, even when delivering bad news
- is written with flair
- uses appropriate tone and is an asset to company image

1 An acceptable letter/memo

- may be mailed as is, but probably requires some revision
- follows format specs and assignment requirements
- is signed/initialed
- has some noticeable mechanical errors
- may inaccurately estimate the audience
- may not emphasize “you” attitude
- may include negative terminology

0 An unacceptable letter/memo

- is not mailable (requires a major overhaul)
- does not follow format specs and/or assignment requirements
- has noticeable mechanical errors
- uses inappropriate tone
- is not signed/initialed
- ignores the reader
- has negative terminology
- is a detriment to company image

5. Contract Method. At the beginning of a course, students sign contracts outlining the requirements that will determine their final grades. An example of such a contract follows:

CONTRACT

During the semester I would like to work for a grade of _____. I will complete the requirements stated below for this grade; if I fail to meet the requirements, I will contract down.

Proposed by _____ Date _____

Approved by _____ Date _____

C-Level

1. I will read the assigned material.
2. I will meet the basic requirements of the course, performing at a satisfactory level and handing in written assignments when due. I will rewrite any work that my instructor deems unsatisfactory and return it within one week.
3. I will make a positive contribution to the small-group activities.
4. I will take a final exam, performing at a satisfactory level, if my absences are excessive.

B-Level

1. I will complete all requirements for the “C” level.
2. I will make an oral report on _____
(some phase of communication that meets the instructor’s approval).
3. I will interview a business executive on communication in his or her firm and write a report on the interview.
Name and/or title of executive _____
Name of business firm _____

4. I will perform at this grade level; that is, most papers will be satisfactory when turned in the first time.

A-Level

1. I will complete all requirements for the “B” level.
2. I will write a formal report.
3. I will work at this grade level throughout the semester; that is, an assignment will seldom, if ever, have to be rewritten.

6. **Workplace-Based Method.** This method allows you to use a rubric to grade students in a way that parallels how writing might be evaluated on the job. If you choose this method, you should give students a copy of the rubric at the beginning of the course and go over it in detail.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS RUBRIC

Use the table below to see how you will be graded on all writing assignments in this course.

Grade	Description
A	Your supervisor would gladly send this message with no edits. This document would make you stand out among other employees. You might even get a raise or promotion!
B	Your supervisor would send this message with minor edits; document has a few grammatical, mechanical, and/or format errors.
C	This document contains several grammatical, mechanical, and/or format errors. It needs major editing before it could be sent.
D	This document shows some understanding of the assignment, but it must be completely rewritten before your supervisor would send it.
F	This document does not show an understanding of the assignment. It would put you in serious jeopardy on the job.

Template for Grading Writing Assignments

On the next page you will find a template for possible use in grading student writing assignments. This “assigned weights” rubric is very effective in achieving objectivity in grading. It is also effective in avoiding student confrontation over writing weaknesses. You might wish to print this sheet on colored paper, cut it into quarters, and distribute a number of slips to each student. Each assignment turned in should be accompanied by one of the grading slips.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION EVALUATION
 Assignment or page number _____

Staple this sheet to the upper left corner of the document. Write your name on the back of your document.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Opening, closing	10	_____
Strategy, organization	10	_____
Completeness, accuracy	10	_____
Tone, goodwill effect	10	_____
Clarity, coherence	10	_____
Fluency, written expression (parallelism, sentence unity, conciseness, etc.)	10	_____
Overall effect, originality	10	_____
Mechanics	30	_____
Spelling, typo (-4)		
Word choice (-4)		
Major error (comma splice, run-on, fragment, subject-verb agreement, etc.) (-6)		
Minor error (-2)		
Idiom, syntax, other errors (-2 to -6)		
Bonus points		_____
Total Points (100 possible)		=====

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION EVALUATION
 Assignment or page number _____

Staple this sheet to the upper left corner of the document. Write your name on the back of your document.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Opening, closing	10	_____
Strategy, organization	10	_____
Completeness, accuracy	10	_____
Tone, goodwill effect	10	_____
Clarity, coherence	10	_____
Fluency, written expression (parallelism, sentence unity, conciseness, etc.)	10	_____
Overall effect, originality	10	_____
Mechanics	30	_____
Spelling, typo (-4)		
Word choice (-4)		
Major error (comma splice, run-on, fragment, subject-verb agreement, etc.) (-6)		
Minor error (-2)		
Idiom, syntax, other errors (-2 to -6)		
Bonus points		_____
Total Points (100 possible)		=====

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION EVALUATION
 Assignment or page number _____

Staple this sheet to the upper left corner of the document. Write your name on the back of your document.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Opening, closing	10	_____
Strategy, organization	10	_____
Completeness, accuracy	10	_____
Tone, goodwill effect	10	_____
Clarity, coherence	10	_____
Fluency, written expression (parallelism, sentence unity, conciseness, etc.)	10	_____
Overall effect, originality	10	_____
Mechanics	30	_____
Spelling, typo (-4)		
Word choice (-4)		
Major error (comma splice, run-on, fragment, subject-verb agreement, etc.) (-6)		
Minor error (-2)		
Idiom, syntax, other errors (-2 to -6)		
Bonus points		_____
Total Points (100 possible)		=====

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION EVALUATION
 Assignment or page number _____

Staple this sheet to the upper left corner of the document. Write your name on the back of your document.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Opening, closing	10	_____
Strategy, organization	10	_____
Completeness, accuracy	10	_____
Tone, goodwill effect	10	_____
Clarity, coherence	10	_____
Fluency, written expression (parallelism, sentence unity, conciseness, etc.)	10	_____
Overall effect, originality	10	_____
Mechanics	30	_____
Spelling, typo (-4)		
Word choice (-4)		
Major error (comma splice, run-on, fragment, subject-verb agreement, etc.) (-6)		
Minor error (-2)		
Idiom, syntax, other errors (-2 to -6)		
Bonus points		_____
Total Points (100 possible)		=====



EVALUATING ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Many instructors encourage peer evaluation of oral presentations. To guide your students in how to evaluate a presentation, you might wish to use a rubric such as that shown below. This descriptive evaluation system is helpful in teaching students what to look for and how to judge presentations. This rubric was developed by Kim Sydow Campbell, David L. Mothersbaugh, Charlotte Brammer, and Timothy Taylor at the University of Alabama. Notice that it assigns numeric values to various levels of performance.

A Rubric for Judging the Quality of an Oral Business Presentation

	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Eye Contact</u>	Essentially no eye contact. Reads continuously, glancing up only once or twice a minute. Stares at ceiling or consistently looks at slide screen	Somewhere between no and moderate eye contact.	Moderate eye contact. Either faces audience but refers to notes or slides occasionally (couple of times a minute) or turns body sometimes to screen.	Somewhere between moderate and continuous eye contact.	Continuous eye contact. Faces audience and refers to notes or slides less than once a minute. Rarely glances at slide screen or at part of room away from audience.
<u>Body Language</u>	Distracting. Sways, paces, or fidgets so that audience is distracted from presentation. Poor use of hands (in pockets, jingling keys, playing with pen).	Somewhere between distracting and neutral body language.	Neutral. Stands facing the audience. Occasionally uses hands and body movements appropriately, but may still be a little stiff or nervous.	Somewhere between neutral and engaging body language.	Engaging. Uses gestures (e.g., pointing with hands) and expressions to enhance the presentation. Speaker looks very comfortable and natural.
<u>Voice Qualities</u>	Poor. Halting, uneven pace. Cannot hear all of the words due to mumbling, speaking too softly, speaking too quickly, or in a monotone.	Somewhere between poor and adequate voice qualities.	Adequate pace and volume. Speaks fairly clearly but lacks sufficient variations in vocal intonation for emphasis.	Somewhere between adequate and excellent voice qualities.	Fluid, natural delivery. Speaks moderately slowly with good vocal variety, articulation, and volume.
<u>Command of Material</u>	Poor. Struggles often to find words. Reads most of presentation.	Somewhere between poor and adequate command of material.	Reads less than once a minute, struggles occasionally to find words.	Somewhere between adequate and excellent command of material.	Excellent. Does not read from notes or slides. Expresses ideas fluently in own words.
<u>Visual Aids</u>	Ineffective. Overheads, slides, or handouts are hard to read, distracting, or inadequate for presentation.	Somewhere between ineffective and adequate visual aids.	Adequate. Readable overheads, handouts. Enhance presentation.	Somewhere between adequate and excellent visual aids.	Excellent overheads or slides. Easy to read, attractive, greatly enhance presentation.
<u>Content</u>	Poor. Purpose not clear, information disjointed or inadequate.	Somewhere between poor and adequate content.	Adequate. Information is usually relevant and appropriate to audience.	Somewhere between adequate and engaging content.	Engaging. Information is relevant to audience. Excellent details.

Source: "Peer Versus Self-Assessment of Oral Business Presentation Performance," *Business Communication Quarterly*, Volume 64, Number 3, September 2001, pp. 25–42. Reprinted with the permission of the Association for Business Communication.

Depending on what you emphasize in your class, you might wish to use the template shown on this page for grading student oral presentations.

<p>ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION Speaker's Name _____</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Excellent</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Above average</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8–9 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5–7 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Needs Improvement</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4 or below</td> </tr> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Were the opening and closing clear and well planned? _____ 2. Did the speaker help you remember two to four main points? _____ 3. Were the speaker's movements and eye contact effective? _____ 4. Were the visual aids effective and handled appropriately? _____ 5. Was the presentation well organized, coherent, and obviously practiced before delivery? _____ <p>Total Points (50 possible) _____</p> <p>On the back add a statement of praise and one pointer for improvement.</p>	Excellent	10 points	Above average	8–9 points	Average	5–7 points	Needs Improvement	4 or below	<p>ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION Speaker's Name _____</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Excellent</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Above average</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8–9 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5–7 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Needs Improvement</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4 or below</td> </tr> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Were the opening and closing clear and well planned? _____ 2. Did the speaker help you remember two to four main points? _____ 3. Were the speaker's movements and eye contact effective? _____ 4. Were the visual aids effective and handled appropriately? _____ 5. Was the presentation well organized, coherent, and obviously practiced before delivery? _____ <p>Total Points (50 possible) _____</p> <p>On the back add a statement of praise and one pointer for improvement.</p>	Excellent	10 points	Above average	8–9 points	Average	5–7 points	Needs Improvement	4 or below
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STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING PLAGIARISM

As many business communication instructors have learned, plagiarism has never been easier than it is today. Previously, students had to make an effort and spend some money to find a prepared research paper to turn in. But today the Internet has greatly simplified the task of appropriating material for research papers. In less than an hour, students can Google their way to an entire term paper by merely cutting and pasting selected passages. For those with more money than Internet skills, hundreds of online paper-mills or “cheatsites” provide papers in off-the-shelf or customized forms.

Clever instructors can, however, use a number of effective techniques to greatly reduce plagiarism in student papers.

- **Help students understand proper research practices.** Don’t assume that students know what plagiarism is. Teach them by showing examples of an original text, a plagiarized version, and an acceptable paraphrased version. Create your own examples or use those appearing in Chapter 12 of Guffey’s *Business Communication: Process and Product*, 5e, page 406. Other examples are available in the many Web sites devoted to plagiarism and its prevention.
- **Teach plagiarism from a coaching perspective.** Talk about plagiarism in class. Discuss good manual and electronic notetaking skills. Spend time explaining how to avoid “mistakes” that result in plagiarism.
- **Discuss the seriousness of plagiarism and its penalties.** Describe the consequences that plagiarists suffer. Develop knowledge of Web sites that sell assignments in your discipline and be sure your students are aware of your knowledge. Talk with them about how easy it is for knowledgeable instructors to use the Internet to locate character strings and their sources.
- **Monitor each step of the writing process.** Require students to turn in outlines, drafts, notes, and annotated bibliographies as part of an ongoing assignment. Monitoring is probably the single most important technique in preventing plagiarism.
- **Require students to save and submit Web pages.** One of the biggest attribution problems today is that of citing Internet references no longer available. To avoid this dilemma, ask students to save a permanent copy of a Web page (click “Save as” on Internet Explorer and save in a directory or print relevant pages). You can find a complete description of this technique in the November, 2001 Online Guffey Report. Issues are archived at the Guffey Web Site for Instructors.
- **Assign original topics.** Avoid repeating assignments used in previous classes, and don’t allow popular topics that have a ton of prepared papers all ready to be purchased by writing- and ethics-challenged students.
- **Teach and grade citation techniques.** Explain how to quote individuals and sources and how to use APA, MLA, or your special citation format. Make the proper citation of sources a specific part of the research paper grade.

- **Consider using a commercial plagiarism detection service.** If your school is willing to foot the bill, subscribe to Turnitin.com. Students submit their papers to the service, which makes a “digital fingerprint” of the paper. It cross-references that fingerprint against its database of hundreds of thousands of papers. It also scours the Web searching for similar phrasing. Then it creates a custom originality report for each paper. Few students dare to plagiarize if they know their papers will be scrutinized electronically.

Although large schools assigning many term papers may find it worthwhile to invest in a service such as Turnitin.com, you can achieve excellent results without investing in an expensive service. Just implement the techniques discussed here—especially monitoring the entire writing process.



INCLUDING GRAMMAR IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION COURSE

Business communication classes have a great deal of material to cover. Most of us feel that it’s almost impossible to teach grammar, punctuation, and usage skills in addition to teaching business communication writing skills. One of our goals in *Business Communication: Process and Product*, therefore, is to make students responsible for learning or reviewing grammar/punctuation/mechanics—with a minimum of class time devoted to this review. To help students review these fundamental language skills, we provide two excellent resources: “Your Personal Language Trainer,” a digitized, interactive review, and Competent Language Usage Essentials (C.L.U.E.), a printed review in Appendix A.

YOUR PERSONAL LANGUAGE TRAINER

New to this edition is a remarkable self-teaching review of grammar/mechanics called “Your Personal Language Trainer.” Written by the author, this cutting-edge review program is available at no charge to students at **Guffey Xtra!** (<http://guffeyxtra.swlearning.com>). It enables students to review an entire business English course—including grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and number style—at their own pace. Instead of using valuable class time to teach grammar, instructors can rely on Dr. Guffey to act as a personal trainer in helping students pump up their language muscles! “Your Personal Language Trainer” provides hundreds of sentence reinforcement exercises, all with immediate feedback and explanations for the best comprehension and retention.

Trainer Content. “Your Personal Language Trainer” is keyed to Appendix A, Competent Language Usage Essentials (C.L.U.E.). Trainer includes the following 11 sections:

Nouns	Semicolons & Colons
Pronouns	Apostrophes
Verbs	Other Punctuation
Adjectives and Adverbs	Capitalization
Prepositions	Number Usage
Commas	

Diagnostic Test and Language Profile. An interactive diagnostic test precedes the 11 learning workouts in “Your Personal Language Trainer.” This online test has 66 questions that systematically cover all 11 learning workouts. Students receive a score from 0 to 100 percent in each of the 11 workouts, and they can compare it with the following scale:

95 to 100%	You have excellent skills in this category, but you should complete the workouts to be sure you understand and can explain the rules.
85 to 94%	You need a light review. The workouts can help!
75 to 84%	You need to refresh your memory of the rules by completing the workouts.
65 to 74%	You require careful study of the rules in the workouts.
0 to 64%	You need serious study and follow-up reinforcement in the workouts and your textbook. Consider buying and studying a reference manual.

Three-Step Workouts to Build Skills. Students should then complete the three-step Trainer workouts. These workouts provide rules plus exercises to reinforce learning.

- Step 1 involves a warmup that reviews specific grammar rules. Students read the synopsis and take a quiz.
- Step 2 provides special sentences that focus on the target grammar area.
- Step 3 provides a quiz that measures how well students have pumped up their language skills.

COMPETENT LANGUAGE USAGE ESSENTIALS (C.L.U.E.)

In addition to “Your Personal Language Trainer,” we provide a printed guide to competency in language usage essentials (C.L.U.E.). In Appendix A, students will find 50 guidelines that review sentence structure, grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization, and number style. These guidelines focus on the most frequently used—and abused—language elements. Presented from a business communicator’s perspective, the guidelines also include realistic tips for application. Appendix A offers a list of 160 frequently misspelled words plus a quick review of selected confusing words. These words appear in many of the exercises.

The goal of C.L.U.E. is to present a reasonable package of language concepts that students can study and master. C.L.U.E. doesn’t cover every language rule, each problem spelling word, or all confusing words. It is a selected group of common problem areas. If students conquer this body of guidelines and words, they will be able to meet with confidence about 95 percent of the grammar and mechanics problems that writers face.

Because the number of rules and words is limited, students will not feel that the goal is hopeless. The review exercises include only the principles and words covered in Appendix A.

How to Use C.L.U.E. Give students Diagnostic Test Form A as a pretest. [This test is different from the Trainer diagnostic test, which students administer and evaluate themselves online.]

The C.L.U.E. Diagnostic Test Form A has only 50 points and requires about 15 to 20 minutes to administer. Discuss it with students as they check their own papers. Caution them to be honest and accurate because they need to know how strong or weak their skills are. Don't grade the pretest but do collect and file it. Students who miss ten or more will have difficulty meeting minimum writing standards unless they improve their skills. These students are at risk and should be counseled individually.

At the beginning of your course, you may wish to devote one to three class sessions discussing the grammar/punctuation/mechanics principles in Appendix A. Tell students that they are responsible for mastering the 50 guidelines, plus learning the spelling and confusing words. Set a goal date, say eight to ten weeks into the class. At that time give a second test, Diagnostic Test Form B. Students must pass with a minimum proficiency (which you determine).

If students wish to take another test to improve their scores, you could administer Diagnostic Test Form C in two weeks. Encourage students to study so that they can improve their proficiency. Remind students that they are mastering a limited group of language guidelines and words. It is their responsibility to meet the minimum proficiency level.

What should you do if students do not meet your minimum proficiency? Actually, they will all improve—but perhaps not enough. Some instructors make language proficiency a portion of the final grade, say 10 to 20 percent. Another possibility is lowering a student's final grade one-half grade (or whatever you choose) if they do not meet the minimum proficiency. A recent research study confirms what many instructors have always known—learning can be substantially improved if motivated by grades. (See Bacon and Anderson, "Assessing and Enhancing the Basic Writing Skills of Marketing Students," *Business Communication Quarterly*, December, 2004, p. 451.) Students make much more effort to learn when graded on their final performance.

By devoting a small portion of class time to discussing the C.L.U.E. exercises, you help students review guidelines that are easily forgotten. Most students genuinely appreciate the challenge because they recognize their weaknesses and truly want to improve. The student study guide provides additional C.L.U.E. exercises. By the way, selected writing techniques (such as parallelism and misplaced modifiers) are not included in the C.L.U.E. program because they are treated in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

SPELL RIGHT! AND SPEAK RIGHT!

In addition to a complete grammar review with "Your Personal Language Trainer," students will find further language resources at Guffey Xtra! "SpellRight!," an interactive program focused on 400 frequently misspelled words, and "SpeakRight," featuring Dr. Guffey's voice to help students hear correct and incorrect versions of frequently mispronounced words.

Competent Language Usage Essentials (C.L.U.E.)
Diagnostic Test Form A

Name _____ Score _____

Grammar: In the space provided, write the letter indicating the word that correctly completes each sentence. Use only one answer for each question.

- ___ 1. If I (a) was (b) were you, I would take the job.
- ___ 2. She dropped off her report when she (a) come (b) came over last week.
- ___ 3. A list showing all the documents prepared for the attorneys (a) was (b) were missing.
- ___ 4. An executive's time and energy (a) has (b) have to remain focused on achieving corporate goals.
- ___ 5. How important (a) is (b) are salary, benefits, and job security to you?
- ___ 6. Please order supplies for (a) her and me (b) her and I (c) she and I.
- ___ 7. All the new equipment (a) seem (b) seems to be working satisfactorily.
- ___ 8. (a) Anyone (b) Any one of the computers may need to be replaced shortly.
- ___ 9. I would appreciate (a) you (b) your (c) you're sending the application immediately.
- ___ 10. The group of players, coaches, and fans (a) is (b) are booking a charter flight.
- ___ 11. Sixty days (a) is (b) are the period of the loan.
- ___ 12. Special reports must be written by (a) whoever (b) whomever has a sales problem.
- ___ 13. One of the men left (a) his (b) their tennis shoes in the locker room.
- ___ 14. The boss told Maria not to take the criticism (a) personal (b) personally.
- ___ 15. Every employee may have (a) their (b) his or her (c) his (d) her tuition reimbursed.

Mechanics: For each of the following sentences, select one letter to identify faults in

- (a) Commas or semicolons
- (b) Punctuation other than commas or semicolons (including hyphens and apostrophes)
- (c) Symbols (including dollar and percent signs)
- (d) Number expression (word or figure form)
- (e) Capitalization

- ___ 16. The newly-passed legislation will affect taxes in Texas, California, and Michigan.
- ___ 17. Eric's report, which was entitled "Living in a Digital World," caused a stir.
- ___ 18. Stockholders for IBM could attend the meeting or they could return their proxies.
- ___ 19. We are earning 42 dollars on every item; however, total sales are slow.
- ___ 20. The President of DataTech met with the Vice President to discuss the 9 percent dip in sales.
- ___ 21. If we receive all the figures we will sign the contract July 1 in our headquarters.
- ___ 22. The memo from our Human Resources Department is quite clear don't you think?
- ___ 23. All three collectors, by the way, specialized in antique german and dutch coins.
- ___ 24. When Alicia is absent, we have only 3 operators in our Customer Service Department.
- ___ 25. We ordered 15 Pentax Cameras to be awarded as prizes.
- ___ 26. Our interviewing team consists of these people: Ann Simms, Accounting, Tom Burns, Human Resources, and Carlos Santana, Operations.
- ___ 27. My graduating class is having it's ten-year reunion June 10.
- ___ 28. The stockholders' meeting was heavily advertised, however, attendance was light.
- ___ 29. To improve their english, many Japanese students purchased the book entitled The Power of Language is Yours.
- ___ 30. Would you please send two copies of Invoice No. 39-5001?

Form A
Page 2

Confusing Words: In the space provided, write the letter of the word that best completes each sentence.

- ___ 31. Her (a) principal (b) principle concern was investment safety.
 ___ 32. The recent decline in prices will surely (a) effect (b) affect the entire market.
 ___ 33. Fidelity's brochure (a) assured (b) insured (c) ensured prospective investors that their money would be in good hands.
 ___ 34. Every new investor was given (a) complementary (b) complimentary concert tickets.
 ___ 35. Good researchers (a) sight (b) site (c) cite the sources of all references.
 ___ 36. After the theft everyone became more (a) conscience (b) conscious of equipment security.

Spelling: For each line of words indicate the letter of any misspelled word. If no word is misspelled, write (e). For each numbered item provide only one answer.

- | | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
|---------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| ___ 37. | accommodate | existence | excellent | feasable |
| ___ 38. | neccessary | practical | sincerely | volume |
| ___ 39. | efficient | independent | seperate | usable |
| ___ 40. | argument | convenient | government | definitly |
| ___ 41. | miscelaneous | occurred | receive | sufficient |
| ___ 42. | budget | accross | consecutive | immediate |
| ___ 43. | congratulate | committee | analyse | restaurant |
| ___ 44. | similar | priviledge | offered | license |
| ___ 45. | consistent | incidentally | equipped | becomming |

Sentence Structure: In the space provided, identify any sentence fault by selecting one of the following letters. If the sentence is correct, select (d).

- (a) Faulty pronoun reference
 (b) Sentence fragment
 (c) Comma splice (comma joining clauses inappropriately)
 (d) Sentence is correct
- ___ 46. We've added fax machines and modems, consequently we must install two new telephone lines.
 ___ 47. Our office recycles paper and conserves energy because it helps save the environment.
 ___ 48. A number of stockholders who attended the meeting and expected to voice their opinions.
 ___ 49. Membership in the organization is voluntary; contributions and grants are the only means of support. This makes it difficult to continue a high level of support.
 ___ 50. Sales are increasing slowly, profits will respond soon.

Competent Language Usage Essentials (C.L.U.E.)
Diagnostic Test Form B

Name _____ Score _____

Grammar: In the space provided, write the letter indicating the word that correctly completes each sentence. Use only one answer for each question.

- ___ 1. Kevin found it difficult to (a) chose (b) choose a color for his new truck.
- ___ 2. If Laura had (a) saw (b) seen the report, she might have caught the error.
- ___ 3. The company's full range of products and services (a) is (b) are offered locally.
- ___ 4. Only the production cost and the markup of each item (a) was (b) were known.
- ___ 5. Lying on the table (a) is (b) are the newspaper, two magazines, and airline tickets.
- ___ 6. Send updated contracts to (a) he and I (b) him and I (c) him and me (d) he and me.
- ___ 7. Most of the new equipment (a) appear (b) appears to be working well.
- ___ 8. (a) Everyone (b) Every one of the applicants presented a laser-printed résumé.
- ___ 9. Bill would appreciate (a) you (b) your answering his telephone when he is away.
- ___ 10. A record of all dividends, rents, royalties, and pensions (a) was (b) were requested.
- ___ 11. Before you may rent a tandem bicycle, \$50 (a) is (b) are required as a deposit.
- ___ 12. Dr. Lee will see (a) whoever (b) whomever is next in line.
- ___ 13. The committee submitted (a) it's (b) its (c) their report yesterday.
- ___ 14. To reduce costs, management pushed for a settlement (a) quick (b) quickly.
- ___ 15. Every new employee should receive (a) his (b) her (c) his or her (d) their orientation packet.

Mechanics: For each of the following sentences, select one letter to identify faults in

- (a) Commas or semicolons
- (b) Punctuation other than commas or semicolons (including hyphens and apostrophes)
- (c) Symbols (including dollar and percent signs)
- (d) Number expression (word or figure form)
- (e) Capitalization

- ___ 16. Our newly-hired supervisor was scheduled to see representatives from Hewlett-Packard, Xerox, and Canon.
- ___ 17. Jennifer's presentation, which was entitled "How to Make Computer Graphics," was excellent.
- ___ 18. Employees at the Minneapolis-based plant could earn 5 percent interest or they could withdraw their funds for deposit elsewhere.
- ___ 19. Each office chair lists for 98 dollars; however, we expect to pay less.
- ___ 20. The Vice President and Marketing Director were called to the President's office.
- ___ 21. If both sides are in agreement the contract will be signed Monday, April 2.
- ___ 22. The positions in our Marketing Department were advertised last week weren't they?
- ___ 23. All nine investors, nevertheless, purchased European and latin American stocks.
- ___ 24. If I remember correctly, I sent only 4 e-mail messages in the morning.
- ___ 25. Our two-year-old Canon Copier is still running well.
- ___ 26. The committee selected three potential convention cities; Atlanta, Georgia; San Antonio, Texas; and Anaheim, California.
- ___ 27. TechTronics will move it's headquarters to Purchase, New York, within eight months.
- ___ 28. All customers' addresses must be accurate, therefore, we must check the list again.
- ___ 29. Because they spoke little spanish, many visitors purchased the book entitled Speak Like a Native in Just Ten Days.
- ___ 30. Would you please send two copies of IRS Form No. 1099?

Form B
Page 2

Confusing Words: In the space provided, write the letter of the word that best completes each sentence.

- ___ 31. Although it was only a (a) miner (b) minor event, management took notice.
 ___ 32. His (a) principle (b) principal problem was written communication.
 ___ 33. New taxation laws will (a) effect (b) affect all corporations.
 ___ 34. Each property owner must sign a (a) waiver (b) waver before construction can begin.
 ___ 35. Because security takes (a) precedence (b) precedents over all other factors, we're seeking safe investments.
 ___ 36. Each new customer was given 1,000 (a) complementary (b) complimentary checks.

Spelling: For each line of words indicate the letter of any misspelled word. If no word is misspelled, write (e). For each numbered item provide only one answer.

- | | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
|---------|----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| ___ 37. | absence | calender | convenient | interrupt |
| ___ 38. | embarrass | dissatisfied | irrelavant | immediate |
| ___ 39. | knowledgeable | ommission | prominent | questionnaire |
| ___ 40. | recommendation | receive | volumn | writing |
| ___ 41. | column | consecutive | familiar | definitely |
| ___ 42. | immediate | referred | separate | omitted |
| ___ 43. | prevalent | noticeable | ninth | undoubtedly |
| ___ 44. | business | acommodate | height | guarantee |
| ___ 45. | February | usually | unecessarily | surprise |

Sentence Structure: In the space provided, identify any sentence fault by selecting one of the following letters. If the sentence is correct, select (d).

- (a) Faulty pronoun reference
 (b) Sentence fragment
 (c) Comma splice (comma joining clauses inappropriately)
 (d) Sentence is correct
- ___ 46. Our deadline is June 1, however we may receive an extension.
 ___ 47. Our specialists are trained in retirement planning, investment strategies, and working capital management. This explains our strength.
 ___ 48. Any number of investors who are looking for flexible leasing arrangements for new equipment.
 ___ 49. Rick suggested flexible work schedules for all who requested them and an extensive revamping of medical benefits. That was a big hit with all employees.
 ___ 50. The bond market is advancing slowly, the stock market is moving forward rapidly.

**Competent Language Usage Essentials (C.L.U.E.)
Diagnostic Test Form C**

Name _____ Score _____

Grammar: In the space provided, write the letter indicating the word that correctly completes each sentence. Use only one answer for each question.

- ___ 1. If you (a) was (b) were in my position, I'm sure you would do the same thing.
- ___ 2. Computer chips were (a) stolen, (b) stole last weekend from two warehouses.
- ___ 3. Here (a) is (b) are the complete list of names and addresses.
- ___ 4. Considerable time and money (a) was (b) were spent on publicity for the event.
- ___ 5. The president told Jeffrey and (a) I (b) me (c) myself that we would start Monday.
- ___ 6. Each of the classifications (a) contain (b) contains four parts.
- ___ 7. (a) Any one (b) Anyone of our 200 employees is eligible to win the prize trip to Hawaii.
- ___ 8. Although some checks were delayed, (a) yours (b) your's was delivered on time.
- ___ 9. One hundred dollars (a) is (b) are too much to pay for one parking ticket!
- ___ 10. A long line of applicants (a) is (b) are waiting to apply for the advertised jobs.
- ___ 11. The first new computer goes to (a) whoever (b) whomever is at the top of the list.
- ___ 12. I certainly appreciate (a) you (b) your responding to my e-mail messages so promptly.
- ___ 13. Someone on the women's team left (a) her (b) their purse in the locker room.
- ___ 14. All student learners were instructed to drive (a) careful (b) carefully near the school.
- ___ 15. Every graduate may pick up (a) their (b) his or her (c) his (d) her diploma today.

Mechanics: For each of the following sentences, select one letter to identify faults in

- (a) Commas or semicolons
- (b) Punctuation other than commas or semicolons (including hyphens and apostrophes)
- (c) Symbols (including dollar and percent signs)
- (d) Number expression (word or figure form)
- (e) Capitalization

- ___ 16. The highly-regarded engineer was hired to work on water projects in Utah, Colorado, and California.
- ___ 17. Erika may compile the list of names and addresses of customers or Steven may do it.
- ___ 18. Tim Roths screenplay, which was entitled "Tattooed Teenage Aliens," made the rounds of Hollywood producers.
- ___ 19. We were offered fifty-three dollars a share; however, we are not ready to sell.
- ___ 20. If you return the entry form by June 15 you will be eligible to win \$50,000.
- ___ 21. Both our President and Sales Manager were unhappy with the 2 percent sales dip.
- ___ 22. If the manager agrees, we will try to hire 2 temporary employees.
- ___ 23. Regulators feel, nevertheless, that the japanese yen and the european euro will remain strong in the currency market.
- ___ 24. Will you please send me a copy of Invoice No. 20-4991?
- ___ 25. All customers' addresses were checked, however, some still have incorrect zip codes.
- ___ 26. The need for Spanish-speaking teachers is discussed in the Board of Education's booklet entitled "Closing the gap: Language Skills across the Curriculum."
- ___ 27. President Bush returned from Europe, and immediately addressed Congress.
- ___ 28. On May 5th my boat and its trailer will be repainted.
- ___ 29. When we went fishing we caught a 20-pound Atlantic salmon at the privately owned lake.
- ___ 30. We brought some Ziploc Bags; however, we did not have enough to package all the items.

Form C
Page 2

Confusing Words: In the space provided, write the letter of the word that best completes each sentence.

- ___ 31. Our realtor promised to (a) apprise (b) appraise each prospective buyer of the unusual contract terms.
- ___ 32. Homeowners are (a) liable (b) libel for “attractive nuisances” on their property.
- ___ 33. If you (a) altar (b) alter any wording in the contract, you must initial the changes.
- ___ 34. Stacy had to consult her (a) conscious (b) conscience before resigning her position.
- ___ 35. Restaurant patrons receive a (a) complimentary (b) complementary glass of wine with their meals on Wednesday evenings.
- ___ 36. Dr. Myers considered himself a person of high (a) principals (b) principles.

Spelling: For each line of words indicate the letter of any misspelled word. If no word is misspelled, write (e). For each numbered item provide only one answer.

- | | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
|---------|---------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| ___ 37. | seperate | miscellaneous | truly | valuable |
| ___ 38. | accommodate | consistent | milage | occasionally |
| ___ 39. | column | convenint | mortgage | necessary |
| ___ 40. | apointment | committee | immediate | irrelevant |
| ___ 41. | occurred | opportunity | pamphlet | permenant |
| ___ 42. | automatically | Febuary | fourth | genuine |
| ___ 43. | criticize | definitely | desirable | serprise |
| ___ 44. | courteous | efficient | goverment | prominent |
| ___ 45. | dependant | emphasize | ninety | therefore |

Sentence Structure: In the space provided, identify any sentence fault by selecting one of the following letters. If the sentence is correct, select (d).

- (a) Faulty pronoun reference
(b) Sentence fragment
(c) Comma splice (comma joining clauses inappropriately)
(d) Sentence is correct
- ___ 46. Employers usually have stacks of résumés from talented applicants, therefore your résumé must be flawless.
- ___ 47. A vehicle apparently ran off Kelton Road and struck the mail box as it attempted to get back on the roadway.
- ___ 48. Although few applicants among the most recent candidates had the proper qualifications for the opening in our Customer Service Department.
- ___ 49. Many students are completing internships, then they are more employable.
- ___ 50. Antiwar protesters released live cockroaches inside the White House on Friday, and they were arrested when they left and blocked a security gate.

Answers to C.L.U.E. Diagnostic Tests

Form A

- 1. b 46. c
- 2. b 47. a
- 3. a 48. b
- 4. b 49. a
- 5. b 50. c
- 6. a
- 7. b
- 8. b
- 9. b
- 10. a
- 11. a
- 12. a
- 13. a
- 14. b
- 15. b

- 16. b
- 17. b
- 18. a
- 19. c
- 20. e
- 21. a
- 22. a
- 23. e
- 24. d
- 25. e
- 26. a
- 27. b
- 28. a
- 29. e
- 30. b or c

- 31. a
- 32. b
- 33. a
- 34. b
- 35. c
- 36. b

- 37. d
- 38. a
- 39. c
- 40. d
- 41. a
- 42. b
- 43. c
- 44. b
- 45. d

Form B

- 1. b 46. c
- 2. b 47. a
- 3. a 48. b
- 4. b 49. a
- 5. b 50. c
- 6. c
- 7. b
- 8. b
- 9. b
- 10. a
- 11. a
- 12. a
- 13. b
- 14. b
- 15. c

- 16. b
- 17. b
- 18. a
- 19. c
- 20. e
- 21. a
- 22. a
- 23. e
- 24. d
- 25. e
- 26. b
- 27. b
- 28. a
- 29. e
- 30. b or c

- 31. b
- 32. b
- 33. b
- 34. a
- 35. a
- 36. b

- 37. b
- 38. c
- 39. b
- 40. c
- 41. c
- 42. a
- 43. e
- 44. b
- 45. c

Form C

- 1. b 46. c
- 2. a 47. a
- 3. a 48. b
- 4. b 49. c
- 5. b 50. a
- 6. b
- 7. a
- 8. a
- 9. a
- 10. a
- 11. a
- 12. b
- 13. a
- 14. b
- 15. b

- 16. b
- 17. a
- 18. b
- 19. d
- 20. a
- 21. e
- 22. d
- 23. e
- 24. c or b
- 25. a
- 26. e
- 27. a
- 28. d
- 29. a
- 30. e

- 31. a
- 32. a
- 33. b
- 34. b
- 35. a
- 36. b

- 37. a
- 38. c
- 39. b
- 40. a
- 41. d
- 42. b
- 43. d
- 44. c
- 45. a

C.L.U.E. Diagnostic Test Form A
Sentence Revision Key

16. The newly passed legislation will affect taxes in Texas, California, and Michigan. [b = punctuation error; do not hyphenate *newly passed* because *newly* functions as an adverb]
 17. Eric’s report, which was entitled “Living in a Digital World,” caused a stir. [b = punctuation error; apostrophe missing in *Eric’s report*]
 18. Stockholders for IBM could attend the meeting, or they could return their proxies. [a = comma error; use comma to separate two independent clauses joined by the coordinating conjunction *or*]
 19. We are earning \$42 on every item; however, total sales are slow. [c = symbols, \$42 rather than 42 dollars]
 20. The president of DataTech met with the vice president to discuss the 9 percent dip in sales. [e = capitalization error; do not capitalize business titles]
 21. If we receive all the figures, we will sign the contract July 1 in our headquarters. [a = comma error; insert comma following introductory dependent clause]
 22. The memo from our Human Resources Department is quite clear, don’t you think? [a = comma error; use a comma to separate a question added to the end of a sentence]
 23. All three collectors, by the way, specialized in antique German and Dutch coins. [e = capitalization error]
 24. When Alicia is absent, we have only three operators in our Customer Service Department. [d = number expression; use word form for numbers *ten* and under]
 25. We ordered 15 Pentax cameras to be awarded as prizes. [e = capitalization; do not capitalize common nouns following brand names]
 26. Our interviewing team consists of these people: Ann Simms, Accounting; Tom Burns, Human Resources; and Carlos Santana, Operations. [a = comma, semicolon error; use semicolons after department names to separate each name/department unit]
 27. My graduating class is having its ten-year reunion June 10. [b = punctuation error; no apostrophe should appear in the possessive pronoun *its*. The numbers in this sentence are expressed correctly.]
 28. The stockholders’ meeting was heavily advertised; however, attendance was light. [a = comma, semicolon error; use semicolon before conjunctive adverb *however* because it joins independent clauses]
 29. To improve their English, many Japanese students purchased the book entitled The Power of Language Is Yours. [e = capitalization error; capitalize *English* and *Is*. Teach students to capitalize all words in titles except short prepositions (with four or fewer letters) and articles (*a*, *an*, *the*).]
 30. Would you please send two copies of Invoice No. 39-5001. [b or c; polite requests are punctuated with periods, not question marks. We expect action rather than an answer.]
-
46. We’ve added fax machines and modems; consequently, we must install two new telephone lines. [c = comma splice; use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb *consequently*]
 47. Our office recycles paper and conserves energy because these efforts help save the environment. [a = faulty pronoun reference; replace vague pronoun (*it*) with clear reference (*these efforts*)]

48. A number of stockholders who attended the meeting and expected to voice their opinions were disappointed when they could not speak. [b = sentence fragment; write a complete sentence to replace the fragment]
49. Membership in the organization is voluntary; contributions and grants are the only means of support. These conditions make it difficult to continue a high level of support. [a = faulty pronoun reference (*this*) replaced by clear reference (*These conditions*)]
50. Sales are increasing slowly; profits will respond soon. [c = comma splice remedied with semicolon to join two independent clauses]

C.L.U.E. Diagnostic Test Form B

Sentence Revision Key

16. Our newly hired supervisor was scheduled to see representatives from Hewlett-Packard, Xerox, and Canon. [b = punctuation; *newly hired* should not be hyphenated because *newly* functions as an adverb]
17. Jennifer's presentation, which was entitled "How to Make Computer Graphics," was excellent. [b = punctuation; *Jennifer's presentation* is a possessive construction requiring an apostrophe]
18. Employees at the Minneapolis-based plant could earn 5 percent interest, or they could withdraw their funds for deposit elsewhere. [a = commas; insert a comma before the coordinating conjunction *or* because it connects independent clauses]
19. Each office chair lists for \$98; however, we expect to pay less. [c = symbols; use \$98 rather than 98 *dollars* and omit the zeroes for even sums]
20. The vice president and marketing director were called to the president's office. [e = capitalization error; do not capitalize business titles]
21. If both sides are in agreement, the contract will be signed Monday, April 2. [a = comma error; use a comma after the introductory dependent clause]
22. The positions in our Marketing Department were advertised last week, weren't they? [a = comma error; use a comma to separate a question appended to a sentence]
23. All nine investors, nevertheless, purchased European and Latin American stocks. [e = capitalization error; capitalize proper adjective (*Latin*)]
24. If I remember correctly, I sent only four e-mail messages in the morning. [d = number expression; use word form for numbers *ten* and under]
25. Our two-year-old Canon copier is still running well. [e = capitalization; do not capitalize common nouns following brand names]
26. The committee selected three potential convention cities: Atlanta, Georgia; San Antonio, Texas; and Anaheim, California. [b = punctuation; use semicolons to separate city/state units]
27. TechTronics will move its headquarters to Purchase, New York, within eight months. [e = punctuation; do not use an apostrophe in the possessive pronoun *its*]
28. All customers' addresses must be accurate; therefore, we must check the list again. [a = comma, semicolon; use a semicolon before *therefore* when it joins two independent clauses]
29. Because they spoke little Spanish, many visitors purchased the book entitled Speak Like a Native in Just Ten Days. [e = capitalization; capitalize proper adjectives such as *Spanish*]
30. Would you please send two copies of IRS Form No. 1099. [b or c; use a period to punctuate a polite request]

46. Our deadline is June 1; however, we may receive an extension. [c = comma splice; use a semicolon to join independent clauses]
47. Our specialists are trained in retirement planning, investment strategies, and working capital management. This commitment to training explains our strength. [a = pronoun reference; replace vague pronoun *This* with *This commitment*]
48. Any number of investors who are looking for flexible leasing arrangements for new equipment will find help at our new Web site. [b = sentence fragment; complete the sentence to remedy the fragment]
49. Rick suggested flexible work schedules for all who requested them and an extensive revamping of medical benefits. Those suggestions were a big hit with all employees. [a = faulty pronoun reference; replace vague pronoun *That* with *Those suggestions*]
50. The bond market is advancing slowly; the stock market is moving forward rapidly. [c = comma splice; use a semicolon to join two independent clauses]

C.L.U.E. Diagnostic Test Form C **Sentence Revision Key**

16. The highly regarded engineer was hired to work on water projects in Utah, Colorado, and California. [b = punctuation; do not hyphenate *highly regarded* because *highly* functions as an adverb]
17. Erika may compile the list of names and addresses of customers, or Steven may do it. [a = comma; use a comma to join two independent clauses]
18. Tim Roth’s screenplay, which was entitled “Tattooed Teenage Aliens,” made the rounds of Hollywood producers. [b = punctuation; add apostrophe to *Tim Roth’s*]
19. We were offered \$53 a share; however, we are not ready to sell. [d = number expression; write \$53 rather than *53 dollars*]
20. If you return the entry form by June 15, you will be eligible to win \$50,000. [a = comma; use a comma after the introductory dependent clause]
21. Both our president and sales manager were unhappy with the 2 percent sales dip. [e = capitalization; do not capitalize business titles]
22. If the manager agrees, we will try to hire two temporary employees. [d = number expression; use word form (*two*) to express figures *ten* and under]
23. Regulators feel, nevertheless, that the Japanese yen and the European euro will remain strong in the currency market. [e = capitalization; capitalize proper adjectives such as *Japanese* and *European*]
24. Will you please send me a copy of Invoice No. 20-4991. [c or b; use a period to punctuate polite requests]
25. All customers’ addresses were checked; however, some still have incorrect zip codes. [a = comma, semicolon; use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb *however*; it joins independent clauses]
26. The need for Spanish-speaking teachers is discussed in the board of education’s booklet entitled “Closing the Gap: Language Skills Across the Curriculum.” [e = capitalization; capitalize all words in titles except short prepositions (four or fewer letters) and articles—capitalize *Gap* and *Across*]
27. President Bush returned from Europe and immediately addressed Congress. [a = comma error; omit comma before the conjunction *and* because it does not join independent clauses]
28. On May 5 my boat and its trailer will be repainted. [d = number expression; days following months do not use ordinal form (not *May 5th*), even though we may voice it]

29. When we went fishing, we caught a 20-pound Atlantic salmon at the privately owned lake. [a = comma error; use a comma to separate an introductory dependent clause from the sentence]
30. We brought Ziploc bags; however, we did not bring enough rolls to capture all events. [e = capitalization error; do not capitalize *bags*, a common noun following a brand name]
46. Employers usually have stacks of résumés from talented applicants; therefore, your résumé must be flawless. [c = comma, semicolon error; use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb *therefore* as it joins two clauses]
47. A vehicle apparently ran off Kelton Road and struck the mail box as the vehicle attempted to get back on the roadway. [a = faulty pronoun reference; replace vague pronoun *it* with specific reference, *the vehicle*]
48. Although few applicants among the most recent candidates had the proper qualifications for the opening in our Customer Service Department, we were able to schedule two interviews. [b = fragment; make sentence complete or omit *Although* so that it no longer introduces a dependent clause]
49. Many students are completing internships; then they are more employable. [c = classic comma splice; two independent clauses must be joined by a semicolon]
50. Antiwar protesters released live cockroaches inside the White House on Friday, and the protesters were arrested when they left and blocked a security gate. [a = faulty pronoun reference; replace the vague pronoun *they* with specific reference such as *the protesters*]



VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

Two exciting sets of videos now accompany Guffey's *Business Communication: Process and Product*, 5e. These VHS videos take students beyond the classroom to help build the communication skills they will need to succeed in today's rapidly changing workplace. Although short, these 7- to 12-minute videos provide instructional activities that fulfill the important function of bridging the gap between classroom instruction and the real world of work.

Video Library 1, *Building Workplace Skills*, presents five recently filmed videos that introduce and reinforce concepts in selected chapters of *Business Communication: Process and Product*, 5e. These high-quality videos were made specifically to demonstrate chapter-specific material in *BC:PP* and to strengthen comprehension and retention of key ideas. Filmed in the stunning offices of a Boston financial firm, this set of five videos brings to life and reinforces significant concepts in a way that the textbook cannot. Each video culminates in critical thinking questions that will generate lively discussion and focus learning.

Video Library 2, *Bridging the Gap*, presents six videos transporting viewers inside high-profile companies such as Yahoo!, Ben & Jerry's, and World Gym. Students are able to apply their new skills in structured applications aimed at bridging the gap between the classroom and the real world of work. Nearly all of these videos culminate in student writing assignments.

For each video we provide an instructors' discussion guide that includes a summary of the video, suggestions for use and discussion, and proposed solutions for any assignments. Below are the chapters where the videos seem most appropriate, but you may decide to use them at any time throughout your course.

Chapter	Video Library	Video Title
1 to 4	1	Career Success Starts With Communication Foundations
4	2	Erasing Stereotypes: Zubi Advertising
5 to 7	1	Guffey's 3-x-3 Writing Process Develops Fluent Workplace Skills
8	1	Smart E-Mail Messages and Memos Advance Your Career
8	2	Innovation, Learning, and Communication: A Study of Yahoo!
9	2	Social Responsibility and Communication: Ben & Jerry's
9	2	Routine Business Letters: MeetingsAmerica
10	2	Persuasion and Profitability: World Gym
11	2	Negative News: DawnSign Press
15	1	Effective On-the-Job Oral Presentations
16	1	Sharpening Your Interview Skills



CAREER SUCCESS STARTS WITH COMMUNICATION FOUNDATIONS

Video Library 1

Chapters 1 to 4

Summary of Video

This video provides an overview of the concepts presented in Chapters 1 through 4. Cliff, Jackie, Ramon, and others discuss the importance of communication skills at Integrity Investments. The film illustrates the changing business world, flattened management hierarchies, the communication process, communication flow, ethics, listening, nonverbal communication, and other topics presented in Chapters 1 through 4. The film is unique in that many concepts are demonstrated through role-playing.

How to Use the Video

This video can be used to introduce or review Chapter 1. It can also be used to review Unit 1, which includes Chapters 1 through 4. The film touches on nearly all of the concepts introduced in these chapters. It may also be used to stimulate class discussion and to reinforce key communication concepts.

Discussion Guide

The following critical thinking questions appear on the screen at the end of the film:

- **How is the world of work changing?**
The world of work is changing because many businesses are now conducting global operations. Organizations are flattening management hierarchies so that managers are closer to employees. Many organizations are turning to teams to develop products and services and to conduct operations. Constantly evolving communication technologies change the tools and procedures of work. The workplace is also becoming more diverse, and more emphasis is placed on collecting, organizing, and communicating information.
- **Why are communication skills increasingly important to your career success?**
As organizations flatten their management hierarchies, decision-making is pushed downward. More and more employees, individually and as part of teams, exchange information as they function within teams and become part of decision-making processes. Because so much information is now exchanged by e-mail, writing skills are more important than ever. As our economy becomes increasingly information-oriented, those individuals who can communicate well will be in great demand.
- **What communication skills are most important for businesspeople and why?**
All communication skills—reading, writing, speaking, listening and nonverbal—are important in today’s information-based economy. Writing skills are increasingly important because of the emphasis on e-mail. Listening skills are important as subordinates listen for instructions from superiors and also as employees listen to customers. As employees are promoted into management, their writing, speaking, and listening skills become even more important and can often mean the difference between being promoted or passed over.
- **What communication skills would you like to improve?**
Responses will vary for this question.



ERASING STEREOTYPES: ZUBI ADVERTISING

Video Library 2

Chapter 4

Summary of Video

The video featuring Zubi Advertising demonstrates how a successful businessperson used her knowledge of Hispanic culture to build an advertising company that creates ads appealing to the Hispanic-American market. Despite the obstacles of being a female and a Cuban in Miami, Teresa Zubizarreta created a hugely successful advertising agency. With headquarters in Miami and satellite offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Detroit, and New York, Tere Zubizarreta and her 70-person team work to craft precise messages aimed at Hispanic audiences.

What to Look For

Before students view the video, prepare them by asking them to watch for the following:

- Notice that Teresa Zubizarreta depends both on her intuition and on research to judge what will be appealing to the Hispanic market.
- Listen to the video to learn what her agency means by “erasing stereotypes.”

Student Task

In class, discuss the following:

- **Why is it necessary for big companies such as Ford to hire a company such as Zubi Advertising to develop special ad campaigns aimed at Hispanic markets? What role does culture play in the development of such campaigns?**
Every major company in the United States is developing some form of multicultural/Hispanic marketing. Why? The fastest-growing ethnic market in the United States is the Hispanic community. By the year 2050, one in five Americans will be of Hispanic origin. The buying power of the Hispanic population in the U.S. is skyrocketing, and nearly every organization with a product or service to sell is hiring Hispanic companies to develop effective advertising campaigns. Culture plays a big part in the development of targeted marketing. For nearly 86 percent of the Hispanics in this country, Spanish is their first language. Therefore, it makes sense to develop ads in their language with themes that appeal to their culture.
- **Why is it important for all businesspeople to think about how their products, services, and organizations are perceived in other cultures?**
Any businessperson who wants to be successful not only in marketing products but also in dealing with customers should know how consumers feel about the company’s products. Because the population of the United States is becoming increasingly diverse and because business dealings now stretch way beyond the country’s borders, knowledge of other cultures is critical. In preparing advertisements, agencies try to use expressions and scenes that are appealing to the target culture. For example, Denny’s restaurants launched an ad campaign aimed at the Hispanic market with TV spots using the tag “La mesa esta puesta,” meaning “the table is ready.” This is a familiar expression in Spanish. The ads also showed families, friends, and co-workers gathering to share meals. Each ad was backed with popular and classical Latin music to reinforce Denny’s connection to the Hispanic market.
- **At Zubi Advertising, employees talk about “erasing stereotypes.” What do you think this phrase means? Could advertising that targets specific cultural groups be enforcing stereotypes rather than erasing them? Based on what you learned in your textbook, how is a stereotype different from a prototype?**

At Zubi Advertising the phrase probably means erasing negative stereotypes about Hispanics. For example, negative stereotyping may suggest that Hispanics are only blue-collar workers, that they have little money to spend, and that they are limited to states along the Mexican border. Zubi probably tries to let it be known that Hispanics have terrific buying power, that they are located throughout the country, and that the fastest-growing professional segment in America is Asian and Hispanic business women.

Students may argue that targeting specific cultural groups actually enforces stereotypes. For example, in the video Zubi Advertising employees described what a typical Hispanic felt while purchasing a car. Do all Hispanics prefer glitzy cars with lots of chrome so they can impress their friends and neighbors? Do they all take their families with them when making big purchases?

A stereotype is an oversimplified behavioral pattern applied uncritically to groups. When a stereotype develops into a rigid attitude and when it is based on erroneous beliefs or preconceptions, then it should be called a *prejudice*. Perhaps the term *prototype* might be better to use in describing general characteristics that are open to new definitions. *Prototype* refers to mental representations based on general characteristics that are not fixed and rigid, but rather are open to new definitions.

When Zubi Advertising talks about “erasing stereotypes,” it is probably trying to dispel misconceptions. But it may also build on prototypes of Hispanics, such as recognizing their strong work ethic, religious values, and family orientation. Understanding nuances of language, culture, and media habits makes targeted advertising especially effective.

- **Is stereotyping always inaccurate?**

Although stereotypes may be exaggerated and overgeneralized beliefs, they often contain a grain of truth.



GUFFEY'S 3-X-3 WRITING PROCESS DEVELOPS FLUENT WORKPLACE SKILLS
Video Library 1
Chapters 5 - 7

Summary of Video

This video combines narrative and role-playing to illustrate each phase of Guffey's 3-x-3 writing process. Students see four employees (David, Sarah, and Jackie and Cliff) as they go through each phase of the writing process. Rather than merely state the steps in the writing process, the video actually illustrates what happens in each step.

How to Use the Video

This film will be most useful to introduce Unit 2 of Guffey's *Business Communication: Process and Product*. It sets the stage for Chapter 5, but the video could be used for any or all of Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Discussion Guide

The following critical thinking questions appear on the screen at the end of the film:

- **How can a process help a writer?**
 A writing process helps a writer by providing a skeleton of the process. The writer then has a description of what should be done at each stage. Following a writing process helps avoid writer's block. It enables writers to get started and to work efficiently and effectively.
- **Does the writing process always follow the same order?**
 The writing process does not follow the same order with each project. Often it involves looping back to a previous stage, such as thinking about your purpose and your audience. For example, if you are well along in the composition phase and then realize that your message may be read by the manager's boss, you might decide to go back to the first stage of thinking about what this secondary reader would expect in the message. The writing process is more nearly curvilinear than linear.
- **Why does revising take more time than any other part of the process?**
 Many writers record their ideas quickly and then spend the most time revising and polishing their writing. Important documents must be edited and proofread carefully to be certain they are clear, correct, and readable.



SMART E-MAILS AND MEMOS ADVANCE YOUR CAREER
Video Library 1
Chapter 8

Summary of Video

This video begins with Jackie reviewing Guffey's 3-x-3 writing process. Then Elaine and Sarah take us through the writing process by role-playing a scene in which Elaine is trying to write an important e-mail message to her boss, Bradford. We see what kinds of decisions are made in each step of the process. The video emphasizes significant e-mail dos and don'ts.

How to Use the Video

This video correlates directly with Chapter 8. Use it to introduce the chapter and spotlight the importance of e-mail messages.

Discussion Guide

The following critical thinking questions appear on the screen at the end of the film:

- **What are some e-mail catastrophes that you have heard about? How could they be avoided?**
 Students should be able to relate examples of e-mail disasters, such as sending a message to the wrong person or responding to an entire list of people rather than to the sender alone. To avoid disastrous e-mail catastrophes, writers must remember that e-mail creates a permanent record. They should avoid responding when angry. Your students will probably suggest many other techniques for avoiding e-mail catastrophes. Many of them have had first-hand experience with e-mail problems.
- **What do you think businesspeople mean when they say they have a “love/hate” relationship with e-mail?**
 Businesspeople love e-mail because it is a fast communication channel that requires little effort. They begin to hate it, however, when writing and responding to e-mail begins to cut into their daily work schedule. E-mail has become so easy to use that it is overused and misused. In addition, most of us receive many spam messages that clog the system and prevent us from focusing on important messages.
- **Why is it important to remember that e-mail is not like a telephone conversation?**
 Although it may seem like a casual phone call, every e-mail message produces a written record of what was written. The record appears not only on the writer's computer but also on the receiver's computer and on many servers and back-up systems along the way. E-mail messages have become the “smoking gun” in many lawsuits today. Prosecutors may demand computer records, and every e-mail message can be scrutinized as evidence in litigation.



INNOVATION, LEARNING, AND COMMUNICATION: A STUDY OF YAHOO!

Video Library 2 Chapter 8

Summary of Video

This film presents a quick look at a young company and how it solves some of its challenges. Yahoo! is described as the Internet's most popular navigational service. Established in the early 1990s, it has become a comprehensive Internet portal offering many services in addition to its search tool function. The film features the young founders, David Filo and Jerry Wang, as well as other executives. One critical thinking question is presented: "How can a high tech company like Yahoo! continuously innovate to achieve success in a highly competitive environment?" The film then answers the question by explaining that Yahoo! has become a "learning" organization. It encourages employees to experiment, act independently, and solve problems. Its strategy includes rapid response to competition, creation of new services, and constant monitoring of Internet content.

How to Use the Video

Encourage students to view Yahoo! as a place where they work. The film familiarizes them with some of Yahoo!'s managers and operating strategies. Instead of focusing on a macro approach to the company and its operating strategies, however, we want to take a micro approach and use this film as a context for a specific business communication problem: writing a request memo.

Student Task

After viewing the video describing the Internet company Yahoo!, you are to assume the role of assistant to John Briggs, Senior Producer, who appeared in the video. John has just received a letter asking for permission from another film company to use Yahoo! offices and personnel in an educational video, similar to the one you just saw.

John wants you to draft an e-mail message for him to send to the operations manager, Ceci Lang, asking for permission for VX Studios to film. VX says it needs about 15 hours of filming time and would like to interview four or five managers as well as founders David Filo and Jerry Yang. VX would need to set up its mobile studio van in the parking lot and would need permission to use advertising film clips. Although VX hopes to film in May, it is flexible about the date. John Briggs reminds you that Yahoo! has participated in a number of films in the past two years, and some managers are complaining that they can't get their work done.

Write a persuasive memo or e-mail message to Ceci Lang, Operations Manager, asking her to allow VX Studios to film at Yahoo!. Your request memo should probably emphasize the value of these projects in enhancing Yahoo!'s image among future users. Provide any other details you think are necessary to create a convincing request memo that will win authorization from Ceci Lang to schedule this filming.

Proposed Solution [Yahoo! Memo]

To: Ceci Lang <clang@yahoo.com>
From: John Briggs <jbriggs@yahoo.com>
Date: Current
Subject: SCHEDULING FILMING OF EDUCATIONAL VIDEO

Please authorize the filming of an educational video in the month of May. Although Yahoo! has participated in a number of these filming sessions, we believe that these videos are well worth the effort because they strengthen our brand awareness among college students, an important market segment for us.

If we agree to participate in this project, VX will need to

- Shoot 15 hours of film here at Yahoo! headquarters in May.
- Interview four or five managers as well as David Filo and Jerry Yang.
- Set up its mobile studio van in our parking lot.
- Obtain permission to use selected film clips from our ad pieces.

Your authorization before March 20 will enable me to begin scheduling the interviews with the least disruption to our managers' working schedules. Thanks!

John



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION: BEN & JERRY'S

Video Library 2

Chapter 9

Summary of Video

In this video we learn about Ben & Jerry's, the premium ice cream maker established in 1978 in Burlington, Vermont. The film pictures managers at Ben & Jerry's as they discuss six factors and issues affecting the company's potential for continuing success: demographics, political/legal issues, competition/economic factors, technology, and social change. We learn that although super premium ice cream is considered recession-proof and inflation-proof, Ben & Jerry's faces a number of challenges if it is to continue to be a profitable, as well as a socially responsible, business. In describing its commitment to the environment, we learn about a new package being developed for its ice cream.

How to Use This Video

The last portion of this short video focuses on its new packaging. As an environmentally conscious business, Ben & Jerry's redesigned its pint containers to use unbleached paper. This may seem like a small matter, but it involved developing an entirely new packaging material for its ice cream. That packaging material had to please its marketing people, who wanted to show off their great label graphics. It also had to use paper that had not been bleached with chlorine. What's wrong with chlorine? Although it makes paper white, chlorine contains dioxin, which is known to cause cancer, genetic and reproductive defects, and learning disabilities. In producing paper, pulp mills using chlorine are also adding to dioxin contamination of waterways. Eventually, Ben & Jerry's found a new chlorine-free, unbleached paper board for its packages. That was the good news. The bad news is that the inside of the package is no longer white; the interior of the new packaging is now brown.

The video establishes a context for a writing problem in which students respond to a customer who is upset about the new packaging.

Student Task

Assume you've been hired at Ben & Jerry's to help answer incoming letters. Although you're fairly new, your boss gives you a letter from an unhappy customer. This customer opened a pint of Ben & Jerry's "World's Best Vanilla" and then threw it out. He saw the brown inner lid and sides of the package, and he decided that his pint must have been used for chocolate before it was used for vanilla. Or, he said, "the entire pint has gone bad and somehow turned the sides brown." Whatever the reason, he wasn't taking any chances. Although he had been a long-time customer, he now wanted his money back. His last comment was, "I like your stand on environmental and social issues, but I don't like my ice cream in used containers."

Write a letter that explains the brown carton, justifies the reason for using it, and retains the customer's business. The letter should be addressed to Mr. Adam W. Johnson, 4030 West Griswold Road, Phoenix, AZ 85051.

Discussion Guide

Help students understand this writing problem by posing the following questions.

- **In letters that grant claims and adjustments, the writer generally tries to rectify the wrong. Does a "wrong" exist in this case? Why or why not?**

No wrong exists in this situation. The customer simply does not understand that the new containers have brown interiors.

- **Should you try to regain the confidence of this customer? How could that be done?**
Yes, you should try to regain the confidence of this customer. You can do that by explaining why the interior of the new packaging is brown.
- **How could you learn more about the new containers so that you can answer this customer accurately?**
As a new employee who needs information, you would probably first try to find it yourself before admitting your ignorance. A great way to learn about your company is to go to its Web site and read everything there. Another way to learn about what's happening to the company is to check the files and any literature, such as news releases, that may be available. You can also ask fellow employees and your boss.
- **Should you try to promote further business with this customer? How could that be done?**
Yes, you should try to promote further business. You can include one or two coupons for free pints. You could describe new developments in flavors and activities at Ben & Jerry's.
- **How can you display the information to improve readability?**
You can improve readability by listing some of the information.

Instructors may want to send students to the Ben & Jerry's Web site (<http://www.benjerry.com>) for further research.

Proposed Solution [Letter to Ben & Jerry's Customer]

Current date

Mr. Adam W. Johnson
4030 West Griswold Road
Phoenix, AZ 85051

Dear Mr. Johnson:

You'll find in this letter a coupon for a pint of Ben & Jerry's premium ice cream. We hope you will use it to try another pint of our "World's Best Vanilla," about which you wrote recently.

Please give it a second chance. The brown interior of the carton is actually our new packaging with unbleached paper. The outside of the container has a clay coat to make it look white, but the inside is a natural brown color. As you know, Ben & Jerry's has always been conscious of the environment. That's why we searched for a new packaging material. Most ice cream packages are made with a paper board that is treated with chlorine bleach. Bleach contains dioxin, which is known to cause cancer and is also a major contributor to toxic water pollution in many of our streams and rivers.

Our customers, we think, deserve the freshest and most wholesome product we can make. Although our new containers are brown inside, they deliver to you the same great-tasting ice cream. But now your ice cream no longer comes into contact with a package made with chlorine bleach.

As a long-time Ben & Jerry's connoisseur, you know good ice cream. Let us know if you don't agree that our "World's Best Vanilla" tastes great in its new package.

Sincerely,

Enclosure: Pint coupon

P.S. If you'd like to read more about this new packaging, visit our Web site at (<http://www.benjerry.com>). You can also learn about some of our sensational new flavors!



ROUTINE BUSINESS LETTERS: MEETINGSAMERICA
Video Library 2
Chapter 9

Summary of Video

MeetingsAmerica is a destination meeting company. This means that it makes arrangements for meetings and conventions. Businesses planning big conferences often outsource—that is, they hire an outside company—to arrange registration, ground transportation, and special events for the people attending the conference.

Located in Salt Lake City, MeetingsAmerica is a small company owned by Kathleen Barnes and Judy Cannon. The video features Hattie Bryant interviewing the owners, who talk about the unique service they offer. Kathleen says, “We can take a meeting from its inception and do everything connected with that meeting, from booking the hotel, the airlines, all of the audiovisual, the packets, the meeting materials, the registration, everything to the tours and the activities and the evening events and all of the extra things that go with a convention and meeting.”

What to Look For

Aside from the beautiful sights and sounds of the Mormon Tabernacle, be sure to listen for information about what MeetingsAmerica does for its clients visiting Salt Lake City.

Student Task

As an intern at MeetingsAmerica, you answer the telephone, respond to the mail, and generally assist the owners Kathleen Barnes and Judy Cannon. They want to give you experience in answering inquiries from potential customers. Sometimes they respond by telephone, but when they receive a letter or e-mail inquiry, they prefer to send a personal letter on their company stationery.

A letter recently came in from a potential customer. The Association for Dental Health Practitioners is planning a convention for April 15–18 and may select Salt Lake. It wants to know whether MeetingsAmerica could help with registration, ground transportation, and especially with sightseeing trips. What does Salt Lake have to offer?

Kathleen, one of the owners, asks you to compose a personalized response to this inquiry. She says, “You know, April 15–18 is one of our busy periods. But if they book us fairly soon, say, before November 1, we could probably work them in.” She turns to you and says, “To give you practice in writing personalized letters, I want you to draft a response to these people. Be sure to tell them about our unique services and our terrific tour guides!” Kathleen is in a hurry to leave for an appointment, so she tells you to check out the Salt Lake City Visitors Center Web site for a quick review of the sightseeing possibilities in Salt Lake. Describe a few of them in your letter, and enclose a copy of “Salt Lake Meeting Planner Guide,” which includes detailed information on accommodations, dining, shopping, attractions, culture, and recreation.

As you think about this task, you realize that Kathleen didn’t tell you how to close this letter. Decide what would be appropriate in encouraging this customer’s business. Make up any additional information you need. Prepare a draft of the letter for her to sign when she returns to the office. Address it to Ms. Sally E. Williams, Association for Dental Health Practitioners, 108 Morningside Drive, New York, NY 10025.

Possible Solution

Current date

Ms. Sally E. Williams
Association for Dental Health Practitioners
108 Morningside Drive
New York, NY 10025

Dear Ms. Williams:

Yes, MeetingsAmerica would be happy to help the Association for Dental Health Practitioners plan its convention April 15–18 in Salt Lake City.

Salt Lake is a perfect meeting location because it offers unparalleled attractions, scenery, and recreation. Nestled between two spectacular alpine mountain ranges, Salt Lake is a thriving cultural center and was recently named “America’s Most Livable City.” Major attractions include the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Great Salt Lake. But visitors can also enjoy golf, skiing, and one of the country’s finest regional symphony orchestras. It is also considered the gateway to fifteen national parks and monuments, including Yellowstone to the north and Grand Canyon to the south.

MeetingsAmerica offers your group a complete service, not just a segment of the meeting package. We can take a meeting from its inception to completion, from booking the hotel and airlines to ordering audiovisual equipment and printing packets. We also handle registration, tours, and evening events. Best of all, you’ll find that our trained tour guides love to show off Salt Lake to visitors. No other destination planner offers you the range of services provided by MeetingsAmerica, and none can match our enthusiastic and personable tour guides.

Enclosed is “Salt Lake Meeting Planner,” which provides detailed information on accommodations, dining, shopping, attractions, culture, and recreation. April is an ideal time to visit Salt Lake. Our schedule would allow us to book your convention for April 15–18 if you can make a decision before November 1. Please call me at (800) 585-7621 or e-mail me at <kbarnes@meetingsamerica.net> so that we can talk more about your convention and your needs.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Barnes

Enclosure



PERSUASION AND PROFITABILITY: WORLD GYM

Video Library 2

Chapter 10

Summary of Video

This video pictures World Gym Showplace Square, which has been rated “the best gym in the city for your dollar” (Bay Area City Search Web site rating). “The physical plant is huge,” says City Search, with “over 35,000 square feet of space stocked with free weights, treadmills, lifecycles, Stairmasters, recumbent bikes, and rowing machines.” For each muscle group, World Gym provides four different machines made by different manufacturers. Thus, you’re bound to find one that works for you. In addition to the machines, the gym offers a wide array of classes, including one series called “first fitness” for those new to exercise. Members also can take advantage of massage sessions, nutrition counseling, and many other programs. In this video the owners of World Gym Showplace Square explain their operations, challenges, and strategies.

How to Use This Video

Although business is good, World Gym finds that most of its traffic is from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. If it could persuade its members to come later and stay until 10 or 11 p.m., it could increase profitability and improve service. The owners, Joe and Robin Talmudge, are thinking of adding video cameras inside and outside to improve security. This might encourage members to stay later. As a result of watching the video, students understand some of the problems facing the Talmudges. The video, then, serves as a context for the following writing problem.

Student Task

As an assistant to the owners, you have been asked to draft a letter to members that persuades them to fill out a simple questionnaire regarding the addition of security cameras. Although you’re new to the job and to the gym world, the owners value your recent training in business communication.

Discussion Guide

To help students draft their letters, ask the following questions:

- **Is a primary purpose of this letter asking members to fill out a brief questionnaire? What are some secondary purposes?**
Help students recognize that although the primary purpose of this letter to members is to ask them to fill out a questionnaire, the letter should also promote World Gym and encourage goodwill. Asking members to fill out a questionnaire requires persuasion. Since the ultimate goal is expanding the peak hours of use, the letter should encourage this extended use.
- **What do you need to know about the receivers to help you write a persuasive letter?**
Although writers cannot know every receiver individually, they can make valid educated guesses about the receivers. Receivers are probably busy people with jobs that restrict their hours. Many of today’s workers do not have 8-to-5 jobs. They have flexible hours, and many of them could probably alter the hours when they come to the gym. Many receivers are probably female. You could check enrollment figures to learn exactly how many are female. Why? Females are probably more concerned with security. Lights in the parking lot and at outside entrances might encourage them to come later and stay later.
- **What effect do you anticipate that the letter will have on receivers? Could the suggestion of security cameras frighten some members?**
Most receivers will probably be neutral towards this letter. They will not be particularly eager to respond, but they will not be hostile. However, some females might be turned off by a letter that

suggests security may be a problem. They may not have considered the possibility that the gym might be dangerous. The letter must be worded carefully to avoid alarming skittish members.

- **Is a letter the best channel of communication for the message? What other channels might be possible?**
A letter provides the best opportunity to explain the message. It can also be used to promote the gym and to promote customer loyalty. However, it would be cheaper to deliver the message in an announcement at the counter in the lobby. A sign could be made, and flyers could be handed out asking members to respond. Yet, such a method would elicit only a haphazard response. Many members wouldn't see the need to respond. A letter suggests that the owners consider this an important issue that requires member support before they proceed.
- **What action do you want receivers to take? How can you motivate them to act?**
Students should decide what they want receivers to do. Are receivers to fill out the questionnaire and return it in an envelope that they provide? Do the owners want to provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope? (Assume that you checked with the owners and they vetoed this alternative as too costly.) Should receivers fill out the questionnaire and return it to a collection box when they next visit the gym?
- **How can you make it easy for receivers to respond and economical for the owners?**
The most economical plan is to have members bring the completed questionnaire to the gym on their next visit.
- **What direct or indirect benefits can you suggest?**
The direct benefit for approving the installation of security cameras, of course, is improved security. Other direct benefits would be less crowding on the equipment during peak times. Members wouldn't wait for favorite machines. Moreover, additional classes could be offered because of extended times. Members could also receive more attention from trainers.
- **Should you be totally candid with members and tell them that you think adding security cameras will increase profitability for World Gym?**
Persuasive messages are most effective when they are written from the receiver's perspective. Are receivers interested in the profitability of the owners? Of course not! They're concerned with getting on the equipment when they want to use it, enrolling in classes that they want, having trainers available to help them, and feeling secure when they enter and leave the gym. These are the benefits that should be emphasized in a message to them.
- **Since you are going to the trouble of asking for feedback, should you also ask members if they have any ideas for reducing the crush at peak times?**
World Gym should probably take advantage of this opportunity to ask for any suggestions that members have in regard to relieving the peak time crush and extending workout times.

Instructors may ask students to write only the letter or write the brief questionnaire as well.

Proposed Solution

Dear Valued World Gym Member:

You probably chose World Gym because it is one of the top-rated gyms in the San Francisco area. To continue to provide you with the best equipment and programs in the area, we need your feedback.

Our goal is to offer you quality equipment, excellent programs, and helpful support staff. You could be better served and you would receive more individual attention if we could extend our peak usage time. You have probably noticed that the gym is busiest from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Although we can't stretch an hour, we would like to make better use of the time between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. With more members coming later, we would have less of a crush from 4 to 8 p.m. You wouldn't wait for your favorite treadmill, and you would have more one-on-one time with our trainers.

To encourage you to stay later, we're considering adding security cameras in our parking area, the entrance, and inside facilities. Although World Gym has never had an incident that endangered a member, we think that you'd be more comfortable with these cameras in action.

Please tell us what you think. Fill out the enclosed questionnaire and drop it in the ballot box at the front desk when you next visit the gym. We're asking for your feedback because we're devoted to serving you better. If you have any other suggestions for reducing the crush at peak times, please give us your ideas on the enclosed form.

Cordially,

Enclosure



NEGATIVE NEWS: DAWNSIGN PRESS
Video Library 2
Chapter 11

Summary of Video

Named Small Business Owner of the Year in the state of California, Joe Dannis is a unique entrepreneur. You'll learn how he started DawnSign Press, but you'll also see American Sign Language in action. Joe and many of his employees are deaf. As business communicators, you'll be exposed to a unique work environment and be inspired by Joe's success story.

What to Look For

- Notice that both deaf and hearing employees sign to each other.
- Pay attention to the nature of Joe's business and listen to his reasons for hiring both deaf and hearing employees.

Student Task

As a staff employee at DawnSign Press, you were surprised but honored when owner Joe Dannis handed you a letter and asked you to answer it for him. The letter was from Melissa Thomas, a customer who had used one of DawnSign Press's books in a class and found it very helpful. However, she said that she was "profoundly disappointed" when she learned that Joe's business was not staffed by deaf people only. Melissa said that, as a deaf person herself, she had experienced great difficulty in finding employment. She felt that DawnSign Press should set an example by hiring an all-deaf staff that provided jobs for many deserving people. She wants DawnSign Press to change its hiring policy.

Joe knows that you have studied business communication; that's why he asks you to prepare a letter that responds to this inquiry but that may also be used for any future ones. Because you have heard Joe talk about his employment philosophy, you realize that, in a perfect world, he would hire only deaf employees. But Joe is forced to hire hearing employees as well.

In delivering bad news to customers, you remember that you should start indirectly, provide reasons, present the bad news (or imply it), and close pleasantly. You might wish to visit the DawnSign Press Web site (<http://www.dawnsign.com>) for more information. Prepare a draft for Joe's signature. Address it to Ms. Melissa Thomas, 4752 Monroe Street, Toledo, OH 43623.

Possible Solution [Letter to DawnSign Press Customer]

Current date

Ms. Melissa Thomas
4752 Monroe Street
Toledo, OH 43623

Dear Ms. Thomas:

I appreciate receiving your thoughtful letter, and I am happy to know that you found one of our books helpful in your class.

When I founded DawnSign Press, it was very important to me to hire only fluent signers who worked in the deaf field. I would always prefer to hire deaf specialists, such as artists and designers. The sad truth, however, is that I can't always find them. To build a successful team, I found it occasionally necessary to hire a hearing individual. But I always require the new employee to learn to sign and, of course, she or he must have a good attitude. Building a cohesive and skilled team of people with complementary skills is my goal. I'm continually looking for the best person for the job, and DawnSign Press does not discriminate against hearing individuals.

We're proud of the many books produced by our skilled team members, most of whom are deaf. Please visit our Web site (www.dawnsign.com) to see our newest titles, such as *Listen With the Heart: Relationships and Hearing Loss*, and *Know That . . . Quotes From Deaf Women for a Positive Life*.

Sincerely,

Joe Dannis



EFFECTIVE ON-THE-JOB ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Video Library 1

Chapter 15

Summary of Video

To learn more about applying Guffey's 3-x-3 writing process to the development of oral presentations, you see Ramon in the planning stages of his oral presentation to the board of directors for Integrity Investments. Ramon must persuade the directors that a paid time-off plan makes sense for Integrity employees. Ramon and Sarah brainstorm ideas in the prewriting stage of the writing process. Students see what is meant by anticipating the audience and focusing on a purpose. We see Ramon and Sarah go through all three phases of the process, including his successful presentation.

How to Use the Video

This video is especially instructive as an introduction to Chapter 15. It shows students how to implement the 3-x-3 writing process as they plan, research, and organize an oral presentation.

Discussion Guide

The following critical thinking questions appear on the screen at the end of the film:

- **How is the writing process useful in preparing an oral presentation?**

The writing process provides a framework for developing a complete oral presentation. It guides the presenter in determining first the purpose of the presentation. It helps the presenter focus on profiling the audience and anticipating how the presentation can be adapted to that particular audience. The process leads the presenter through the organization, composition, and revision of the presentation.

- **What techniques can a speaker employ to overcome fear?**

Presenters can overcome fear by preparing thoroughly and rehearsing repeatedly. They should breathe deeply and try to convert their fear into enthusiasm for the topic. They can use positive self-talk to bolster themselves, and they can shift the spotlight from themselves to their visual aids. They should ignore stumbles, and feel proud when they finish.

- **Should every business presentation use PowerPoint? Why or why not?**

PowerPoint can add pizzazz to a presentation, and its templates help some speakers organize their thoughts. Critics argue that it stifles creativity, forces thoughts into artificial overly simplistic bullet points, and reduces thoughtful expression. PowerPoint overshadows the speaker. Yet, PowerPoint has become the favorite tool of business presenters because it adds structure, sophistication, and efficiency to presentations. However, it should not be used for every presentation. Ask students to come up with some instances when PowerPoint would be a poor presentation medium.



SHARPENING YOUR INTERVIEW SKILLS

Video Library 1

Chapter 16

Summary of Video

In this video you see the job search and employment interview of a recent college graduate, Betsy Chan. We follow Betsy as she finds a job advertisement and prepares for a job interview. The strength of this video lies in the interchange between the company interviewer and a typical applicant. It provides viewers with an inside look at how an actual interview takes place. It also gives viewers a chance to see how both the interviewer and interviewee critique Betsy's interview.

How to Use the Video

This video was made to correlate with Chapter 16 in Guffey's *Business Communication: Process and Product*. It provides a perfect introduction or review of the chapter.

Discussion Guide

The following critical thinking questions appear on the screen at the end of the film:

- **What did Betsy do well in her interview?**
Betsy was enthusiastic and showed good nonverbal cues, such as smiling, nodding, and leaning forward. She was dressed appropriately and used good English in responding to questions. She seemed prepared to sell her strengths. She answered the "sell this pen" question very well. She demonstrated that she could "think on her feet."
- **What could she have improved?**
Although we saw only parts of the interview, we didn't see much evidence that she had researched the company and was aware that it was a financial services (investment) company. She had occasional "Ummms" and "you knows" in her speech. At the end of the interview, she should have summed up her strengths and nailed down what would happen next.
- **How can a candidate prepare for an interview?**
Job candidates should learn about the position, plan to sell themselves, prepare answers to possible questions, and be ready with success stories. They should research the organization so that they know about its field, service, or product. Candidates should study the organization's annual reports, catalogs, Web site, and possible brochures.
- **How can a candidate prepare for and respond to behavioral/situational questions?**
Because behavioral questions are increasingly common in employment interviews, candidates should know how to answer them. Behavioral questions usually begin with "Tell me about a time when . . ." An easy response method involves the STAR plan. Describe a **S**ituation or **T**ask, tell what **A**ction you took, and explain the **R**esults. The best-prepared candidates will practice a STAR narrative for every bullet point on their résumés.



DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

Jo Koster Tarvers
Winthrop University

To make class participation more meaningful, you may wish to add a demonstrated leadership assessment to your syllabus as part of the course grade.

Students may earn 10% of their grade if they do the following tasks:

1. On assigned dates, they each present to the class a summary of concepts from the text and initiate a discussion of why these concepts are important for the skills they are currently learning.
2. Participate regularly in online class discussions.
3. At least three times during the semester, they each bring into class or to on-line discussions “real-world” examples from their own mail, work, reading, or discussions in other classes. They should use these examples to reflect on or illuminate the topics being discussed in class and use them to contribute to the discussion. They may raise such issues as grammar, rhetorical approach to business messages, current business communication practices, and business communication strategies.
4. On the last day of class, they each submit a short memo to the instructor explaining why they should get 10% credit for demonstrated leadership and the letter grade they think they earned. If they do not each submit a memo, they receive no credit.

Benefits To the Student

This assessment is more concrete than a general “class participation” grade for two reasons:

1. As students perform the tasks, they show the instructor and the class that they are thinking about what business communication professionals think about and contribute to the class’s improved understanding of the issues of the discipline.
2. The assessment allows the instructor to talk about “demonstrated leadership” in letters of recommendation.



COLLABORATION AND TEAM WORK

Karen Sterkel Powell
and Mary Ellen Guffey

The widespread use of the team approach in business and industry includes teamwork in preparing written documents and oral presentations. Numerous studies reveal that businesses are increasingly dependent on teams to achieve their goals. Collaborative work is often necessary because rarely can one employee possess expertise in all areas of a business or industry. Thus, the knowledge of employees with specialized skills is required in preparing reports, memos, and presentations. Today's technology enhances collaborative efforts with computers and software that assist teams in composing and revising documents.

Business communication instructors recognize the importance of providing their students with classroom experience in collaborative writing to prepare them for the demands of the workplace, as reflected in the research and publications on the topic.

The following sections describe the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative writing and present guidelines for implementing and managing collaboration in the business communication classroom.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Collaborative writing projects result in advantages and disadvantages to the students and to you, the teacher.

STUDENTS

The advantages that students gain from teamwork projects include:

1. A better understanding of the course's concepts and their application in assignments. Group members have more knowledge and experience than an individual person and provide valuable feedback to each other during the writing process.
2. Efficiency in preparing assignments from sharing responsibilities.
3. The opportunity to earn higher grades.
4. The opportunity to learn to become a good team player by learning about group decision making and interpersonal skills. Learning to be an effective team player helps them perform successfully in class and in the workplace.
5. The development of a tolerance/appreciation of the opinions, personality types, and writing styles of others. This advantage is particularly important for students who will enter a work force that is highly diverse.

The disadvantages of collaborative writing for students include the following difficulties:

1. Handling conflicts that arise from different opinions, personalities, and approaches to the writing process, as well as writing styles.
2. Dealing with unequal member participation.
3. Managing time conflicts in scheduling group meetings.
4. Managing their own time and work load if the group project takes more time than an individual project. While group projects usually decrease the time spent on research and writing, they increase the editing, revising, and coordinating time. If a group does not work together well or if the writing skills are not fairly equal, some students will spend more time on the project than if they completed it on their own.
5. Earning a good grade at least equal to what they would earn on their own. Grades for a class are usually higher with collaborative writing; however, the grades of good students are sometimes negatively affected by group problems and the weak writing skills of other group members.

INSTRUCTORS

The advantages that instructors gain from teamwork projects are as follows:

1. The opportunity to act as facilitator and coach for small groups, thus demonstrating to students how they will most likely be managed in the workplace. Students have an opportunity to observe your use of effective skills for managing groups.
2. The reduced grading time to accommodate increase in class enrollment.

The disadvantages are as follows:

1. Higher grades that may contribute to grade inflation.
2. Increased time demand for managing groups.

The advantages of collaborative writing for students and for you outweigh the disadvantages in the long run, as students are more prepared for writing and group experiences in the workplace. While you spend more time managing groups, this time is offset by reduced grading time. The grade-inflation concern can be minimized by using a combination of individual and group projects and by placing more weight for the course grade on individual projects.

The following sections provide suggestions for making collaborative writing valuable and enjoyable for students and for you.

Collaborative Assignments

The majority of business communication teachers use a formal analytical report or presentation for the collaborative assignment. However, cases involving letters, memos, and short reports can be used if class assignments do not include the formal report, or they can be used in conjunction with the formal report.

Short collaborative assignments might include writing:

1. A letter to a university committee or official about a problem the university has, such as parking, registration procedures, traffic congestion, and inadequate bike paths. Students should describe the problem and offer solutions.
2. A letter to a company inquiring about the company's policies on topics such as social responsibility and ethics.
3. A letter to a businessperson asking him/her to be a guest speaker for the class.
4. An abstract of articles pertaining to communication topics, such as crisis communication, group communication, intercultural communication, nonverbal communication, and listening skills.
5. An informative report on a current communications or management issue.
6. An informative report about a student university organization, a student university committee, or a university office, such as financial aid, housing, student employment, or career services. This is a good way to acquaint lower-level students with the university's services and with opportunities for their involvement with organizations and committees.
7. A short analytical report that includes tables and graphs. To reduce research time, you can provide research sources or put them on reserve at the library. *Consumer Reports* provides product comparisons that could be used for this assignment.

Formal analytical reports used for the collaborative assignment usually consist of the following elements:

- Title page
- Transmittal letter or memo
- Table of contents
- Table of illustrations
- Executive summary
- Introduction (purpose, scope, background or problem, methodology, and report organizational plan)
- Discussion
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Appendix (can include copies of all articles used)
- Reference list

Groups should select their topics with your approval. For lower-level classes with minimal business courses completed, the topics should be general, such as wellness programs, work-force diversity, ergonomics, smoking in the workplace, or intercultural communication (see Activity 14.5 in *BC:PP*, 5e, for an effective intercultural report assignment). For upper-level students, topics can include an analysis of a company and its environment, an investment analysis, a marketing plan for a new product, or an analysis of a computer information system for a company. You should check the proposed scope of the report to ensure that there is enough research and writing for a team project. Also, do not approve topics that have been difficult for previous students to research adequately.

Short collaborative assignments can be incorporated into the formal analytical report project. For example, students can prepare a proposal requesting permission to research the topic they have

selected for the formal report. The proposal should explain why the topic is important to businesses, how they plan to gather the research, a preliminary outline, and a work plan showing tasks to be completed, along with a timetable for completion of the tasks, and who will complete the tasks.

Another short assignment with the formal report project could be a progress report detailing tasks completed, work in progress, problems encountered, and projected task completion dates. Incorporating a “problem encountered” section alerts you to problems that may delay the report. It also provides an opportunity for you to offer suggestions that may help the group solve the problems. Asking the students to include a section on their group’s progress toward becoming a cohesive group could also alert you to some group problems so that you can intervene if necessary. The report can be prepared by the group or by individuals.

Group Formation

Groups of three to five members work best for collaborative writing, depending on the length requirement and complexity of the project. Most teachers report that three is the best number. Time conflicts for group meetings increase as groups become larger, as does the potential for a reduced level of participation by some group members. An odd-numbered group eliminates a tie situation when the group must vote to resolve differences. Students can choose their groups or be assigned to them. If they choose, you should give them some guidance in their selection, such as:

- Get acquainted with classmates early in the semester so that they make an informed decision. They should learn about others’ personalities, work styles, time availability, and interests. However, caution them to avoid people with personalities very similar to their own, as one of the benefits of group work is the variety in personalities and work styles that others bring to the group.
- Discourage selecting good friends as group members, as they may avoid healthy conflict in order to maintain the friendship.

Allowing some time at the beginning of classes for this interaction will help students get to know class members and identify potential group members.

You can also assign students to groups. The assignment can be random or by some criterion, such as their major or concentration. If the class is an upper-level class, grouping by concentration allows the groups to select a topic pertinent to their concentration and to cover the topic in depth. Regardless of the method of assignment, some consideration should be given to the group composition in terms of gender and ethnic diversity. In addition, allowing groups to make some adjustments in their composition may be helpful if, for example, a group finds it has no common free time for group meetings. However, leaving some class time open for group meetings helps to alleviate some of these time problems.

Assigning students to a group can cause stress for the students and require more time for a group to become cohesive. Also, if the group experience and project turn out poorly, students may attribute that failure to you. Allowing the class to vote on whether they want to choose their group or be assigned may eliminate this situation.

After groups are formed, they should choose a leader or a chairperson. You should give the leaders a list of tasks they are expected to perform.

Group Preparation Activities

You can enhance the opportunity for students to experience a successful, rewarding collaborative writing project by thoroughly preparing students for the project. Providing instruction about team processes before the project begins can help students avoid some problems and handle those that do arise.

INSTRUCTION IN SMALL GROUP PROCESSES

Problems related to small group processes include such issues as poor conflict management, personality differences, leadership issues, poor meeting management, poor division of labor, and public speaking anxiety. Therefore, students will benefit from instruction in the following areas:

- Small group development: stages (forming, storming, norming, and performing); building cohesiveness. Suggest they do something fun together to speed up this process.
- Small group roles: maintenance and tasks roles; functional and nonfunctional roles.
- Small group decision making: brainstorming; consensus building. Use some group exercises in class to reinforce these concepts.
- Conflict management: benefits of healthy conflict; supportive versus defensive communication; problem ownership; constructive criticism; avoiding Groupthink.
- Personality styles: strengths and weaknesses of different styles; appreciating other styles; assigning tasks compatible with styles. Give students a personality test, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
- Active listening skills: discuss conversational styles and specific listening techniques appropriate for small groups.
- Meeting management: use of unstructured meetings initially to brainstorm and more structured meetings as tasks become more defined.

INSTRUCTION IN THE WRITING PROCESS

Problems in collaborative writing that are related to the writing process include lack of knowledge about the range and sequence of activities involved, poor division of labor, poor definition of task, as well as different agendas, competencies, and learning styles. You can assist students in learning the writing process in the following ways:

- Provide a report case that informs them of the activities required for the report, a list of the sequence of activities, and the due dates for completing the activities.
- Require students to get your approval of their topic, work plan, and preliminary outline so that you can determine if the group has a good definition of their tasks.
- Discuss methods for dividing the tasks. Students most often use the horizontal model for division of labor where each student researches, writes, and edits a chapter or section of the report. However, businesspeople often use the stratified model, whereby the tasks are

divided according to members' abilities. Thus, one member does the research, one writes the rough draft, one edits, and another prepares the visual aids and keyboards the report.

- Allow groups to choose the model they want to use based on their knowledge, skills, personality strengths and weaknesses. If they choose the horizontal model, suggest that they have one member act as the final editor of all sections so that they are consistent in voice and style throughout the report.

If interviews are conducted or surveys used to gather research, instruct students on the design of interview and survey questions and require them to get your approval before using the questions.

Analytical Report Group Activities

While collaborative analytical reports vary considerably in content, length, and complexity, the following list of activities serves as a guideline for planning the sequence of activities involved in the report-writing process. These activities should appear on the report case students receive, along with due dates.

1. *Preliminary approval of report topic.* This step can be done informally since the goal is to ensure that in general the topic is all right and that another group has not already selected the topic. Having students write you a brief note about their topic should be sufficient. Consider requiring students to attach three current articles on the topic so that you can evaluate the feasibility of the topic.
2. *Proposal due, addressing report topic, research methods, work plan, and preliminary outline.*
3. *Group conference with instructor.* This conference will enable you to ask questions about the proposal and comment on the work plan and preliminary plan.
4. *Surveys, interview questions, and accompanying letters due.* Remind students that you must approve these items before they start gathering their research.
5. *Progress report due with final outline.* This report can be prepared by the group or individually. If it is a group report, ask them to include names of members who are doing each of the tasks. Refer to the previous discussion on progress reports under "Collaborative assignments." Requiring a progress report encourages students to complete their tasks and offers you an opportunity to monitor members' performance.
6. *Introduction section of report and visual aids for discussion section of report.* Requiring these items before students write the discussion section helps to ensure that the group has a well-defined purpose and problem definition. In addition, requiring the tables and graphs at this time forces them to consider carefully which information should be written in text format and which should be in visual-aid format. Return these items with suggestions for revisions, if necessary.
7. *Revised draft of introduction and draft of discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.* Ask group members to write their names by the sections they researched and wrote. This enables you to evaluate the performance of group members and encourages timely completion of the research and writing tasks. You can make some general comments about the draft and return it, but avoid extensive feedback on content, writing style, writing mechanics, format, and so on. If you give them this kind of feedback, the quality of the report they submit is actually just a reflection of how well you edit their rough draft of the report.

Also, if you do this type of editing, students may believe that they only have to revise according to your comments, and they may get upset if you miss something for which you deduct points on the final copy of the report. In other words, you take away accountability for the quality of the report from the students.

If you see some sections of the rough draft that look very poor, copy them before returning the draft. This will provide some documentation to justify lowering a student's grade. You do not have to return the drafts; you may want to keep them as evidence of individual contributions to the report. Ask the student to make a copy of the rough draft, and tell them that you will keep the copy they give to you.

8. *Final copy of the report, along with leader's or chairperson's report and peer evaluations.*
9. *Oral presentation of the report; each group member should use at least one visual aid.* You can grade the presentation on a group or individual basis. Peer evaluations are also very helpful but do not need to be used to calculate the group or individual grade. Videotaping the presentations provides meaningful feedback to the students and can be helpful in justifying a grade if a student challenges it.

Group Performance Evaluation

Business communication instructors want to give students a grade that reflects their writing ability, their contributions to the group's writing process, and their contribution to the group processes during the collaborative project. While no method guarantees this, there are methods of gathering information about individual performances and methods for assigning grades that will minimize injustices and increase the students' satisfaction with the grade assignment process.

ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

Several methods of gathering information about individual work are used by communication teachers. At least two or three methods should be used from the following list:

1. *Confidential peer evaluations.* These evaluations are an incentive to individuals to perform according to the expectations of their fellow groups members. Peer evaluations should focus on behaviors of group members rather than their traits. See page 89 for a sample of a group project peer evaluation form.
2. *Leader's or chairperson's report.* This report should detail the tasks or responsibilities completed by each member and provide a record of meeting dates, times, and attendees. You may also request minutes of meetings with group members sharing the responsibility for submitting these to you periodically so that you can identify the nonperformers.
3. *Student logs or journals.* Ask students to keep a log or journal about the group's activities, the group's small-group processes, and their feelings about other members' behavior and contributions, as well as their own. These should be submitted periodically to determine whether your intervention is necessary with the entire group or with just one member. Logs and journals also can be used to support peer evaluations.
4. *Class attendance record.* Take attendance on class days when instruction is being given on group processes, writing processes, and the report project, as students who are absent miss valuable information that helps them contribute effectively to the group project. Also, if group meetings are held during a class period, they miss that interaction with the group, increasing the out-of-class time required for group meetings.

ASSIGNING GROUP GRADES

Using a combination of group and individual grades increases the likelihood that the grade a student receives is an accurate reflection of his/her writing ability and contribution to the group and the assignment. Thus, a student's grade should be based on the score assigned to the written report and one or more of the evaluation processes described previously. Using a combination of evaluations helps provide you with a defensible and objective basis for assigning grades.

Some suggestions for using the combined evaluations follow:

1. Score the written report and give each group member the same grade. In addition, give a separate grade for each student's contribution to the report and to the group process based on the four evaluations discussed previously. For example, the written report may be worth 100 points, and the other grade may be worth 50 points. You need to establish the criteria for assigning this grade so that you have consistency from one student to another and to inform the students of the criteria.
2. Score the written report and add or deduct 10 points for individual members according to the evaluation they receive on the four evaluation items discussed previously. Criteria need to be established for the 10 points.
3. Score the written report and deduct points (no limit) for individual members according to the evaluations they receive on the four evaluations discussed previously. You should have some guidelines for deducting the points so that there is consistency in the deductions. For example, each low rating on the peer evaluation is -5 points; each missed meeting is -3; each missed class period is -3, and so on.

To minimize having to adjust grades for nonperformers, encourage groups to confront these students early in the project and set some guidelines for what the group expects from them, along with deadlines for completing tasks. If they do not meet the expectations or deadlines, the groups should consult with you. Giving groups the option of firing nonperformers from the group, with your approval, is an incentive to nonperformers to do what is required of them to stay in the groups. If members are fired, they should receive an "F" for the project or be given the option to do the report on their own for a significant deduction, such as 50 percent.

Numerous ideas and options are available for incorporating collaborative writing into the business communication class. The articles in the reference list provide additional valuable information on successfully implementing collaborative writing into your class.

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**CONFIDENTIAL GROUP PROJECT
PEER EVALUATION**

NAME _____ GROUP # _____ SECTION # _____

Rate each person in your group (including yourself) on the criteria indicated using the following scale: Excellent 4, Above Average 3, Average 2, Poor 1.

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4
Quality of contribution				
Quantity of contribution				
Creativity				
Turntaking (allowing all members to actively participate)				
Leadership				
Effort (time spent on project)				
Attitude toward group (cooperation, dependability, willingness to help others)				
Logistics (clerical-type duties)				
Attendance at meetings				
Preparation for group meetings				
Willingness to accept and complete tasks				
Completion of tasks on time				
Overall rating				



IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS: METHODS, ACTIVITIES, EVALUATIONS, AND RESOURCES

Tom Marshall and Jim Vincent
Robert Morris University (PA)

in conjunction with Dr. Mary Ellen Guffey, Thomson/South-Western

The International Listening Association defines listening as “the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages.”

1. Introduction

Listening is more important in the professions than many business communication texts acknowledge. Our task as business communication teachers is to move students from their natural egocentrism as writers, speakers, and listeners to understanding that audiences are multiple, complex, and varied. Only after students are aware of the nature of audiences can they develop the skills to deal ethically and effectively with them.

It is important for us to emphasize that listening strategies are so intertwined with leadership and personal social styles that one’s success as a professional largely depends on how well one really can “hear” the other. Many gender and diversity problems arise in the workplace because people acting in good faith just don’t know how to listen to each other resulting from the many psychological, political, social, and cultural barriers that egocentricity keeps in place. Because we need to teach our students about barriers to good listening and effective strategies for listening, we offer you these activities.

“The average person spends from 42 to 60 percent of daily communication time listening (Purdy). Yet, most people are inefficient listeners; they forget, ignore, or misunderstand up to 75 percent of what they hear (Nichols).” Cited in Patricia A. Lynott, “Teaching Business Communication in an Accelerated Program,” *Business Communication Quarterly*, June 1998, p. 22. See also Marjorie Brody, “Learn to Listen,” *Incentive*, May 2004, 57.

2. Creating a Positive, Proactive Listening Classroom in Business Communication

While listening skills are employed constantly in the business communication classroom as well as in all business contexts, these skills are seldom consciously taught or even acknowledged. Because listening seems such a natural, obvious activity, like breathing or walking, teachers often take it for granted. In a business environment that is increasingly multicultural, fast paced, and communication intensive, listening has never been more important. Probably the most important insight that we can share with our students is that listening is not a natural activity but rather a purposeful act that can be improved through modeling, instruction, practice, and assessment.

To that end, business communication teachers should work hard at modeling effective listening skills as well as establishing a positive listening environment in the classroom. Some simple strategies are effective in accomplishing these goals. Teachers should:

- Listen carefully as students introduce themselves and pass on information about themselves in initial classes. Then when the teacher is able to use a student's name or item of information in a subsequent class, they get the idea that such attention to detail is important.
- Learn student names because it is of utmost importance. In addition, by acknowledging questions and suggestions, even repeating concerns back to the audience, teachers show students that their ideas are taken seriously.
- Encourage students to restate a class member's position before engaging in refutation. Doing so will also help develop a positive listening environment.

In addition to modeling behaviors, teachers should make sure that physical conditions are right for listening activities. They can try to cut down on extraneous noise where possible. That means air conditioning, blowers, overhead fans and coolers, and other distractions must be kept to a minimum. If some areas of a classroom are noisier than others, sometimes baffles, portable walls, or insulation can be used to cut down on extraneous noise. When committed teachers emphasize listening, responsive students most often refrain from idle talk and buzz. Now there is a reason for them to concentrate.

Nonverbal behaviors help also in establishing a positive listening environment. When a teacher or presenter gets out from behind a podium, the audience can observe all aspects of body language. When the face of the speaker is clearly visible, listeners can gauge seriousness and demeanor. Teachers should create seating that allows students to speak directly to others in the classroom and should encourage students to speak clearly and singly so that all others can hear what is transpiring. By modeling effective listening skills, by creating a physical space with sound acoustics, and by encouraging constructive classroom interaction, a business communication teacher can create the kind of classroom that leads to superior listening skills.

3. Keys to Effective Listening

- Prepare yourself to listen.
- Look for areas of interest with the speaker.
- Judge content, not delivery, and avoid premature judgments.
- Let the speaker finish; don't interrupt.
- Listen for ideas and identify the speaker's evidence.
- Summarize or restate what the speaker is saying.
- Note the larger issues.
- Be aware of emotions and notice body language as a clue to emotions.
- Be flexible.
- Resist distractions.
- Keep your mind open; try to access the speaker's world, not your own.
- Work at listening.

Three Myths of Listening

Listening is a natural activity.

Hearing and listening are the same thing.

You are speaking to a mass audience.

Three Truths of Listening

Listening is learned.

Telling is not communicating.

You speak to one individual at a time even in large audiences.

4. Learning Objectives of the Activities

Cognitive goals

Students will

- Develop habits of effective listening.
- Accurately summarize and paraphrase information from reading and listening
- Listen critically, employ and assess nonverbal cues in oral communication, and provide criticism to others in a collaborative and supportive manner.
- Identify and evaluate, through an analysis of oral communication, a communicator's purposes, assumptions, and attitudes, as well as the strengths of arguments and the relevance and appropriateness of evidence in relation to audience, purpose, and situation.
- Enhance listening skills through interacting with foreign speakers with unusual pronunciations.

Affective goal

- Develop understanding and positive attitudes toward listening to the perspectives of others.

5. Activities

The following activities help sharpen students' listening skills. Since several activities may be adapted to different subject matters, you may integrate them throughout the term to reinforce skills and to provide variety of instruction.

A. Listening Check

Approximate class time: 10–15 minutes

This activity is relatively easy to implement. It involves reading or speaking a short passage relating to the material that is under consideration during class time. You can build a library of good short passages as you develop the assignment from class to class. Newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal* and business news magazines such as *Business Week* are good sources for passages. Read the passage and then ask students orally or in writing to answer two short questions:

- 1) What is the thesis of the passage?
- 2) Recall one bit of evidence that supports the thesis.

The Listening Check is also good to test how students are processing class lectures. Near the end of the class session, ask the students to write down the key point of the lecture and one piece of support. Collect the papers to check what they think you are saying. You may find yourself saying, "But that's not what I meant. That's not it at all."

Another variant is to have students in pairs exchange papers and negotiate what they thought they heard. Then have several pairs report to the class to note differences. Correct any misperceptions if need be (and experienced teachers know that misperceptions will occur).

Objective of this activity: After listening to the selected passage, students will accurately summarize and paraphrase its key information.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of a student’s oral and written responses. In the interest of time, you may wish to spot check only students’ written or oral responses. If the spot check reveals weak performance, you may want to do a more thorough review of each student’s written responses.

What you can expect from this activity: Very likely, students will make some predictable mistakes. Difficult or unusual vocabulary items will surely be confusing. You will find, however, that as a result most students will begin to attend more carefully to oral language in the classroom, especially if they know that they will be asked about it. You should seek to help students examine the reasons for mishearings and give them the motivation and tools to create a theory of effective personal listening.

B. Supportive Listening

Approximate class time: 10–15 minutes

The skills practiced in this activity are applicable to situations in which there is some degree of inherent conflict such as job interviews, performance reviews, and negotiations. The important concept practiced in the activity is to earn your listener’s goodwill by *showing* that you are listening and not interrupting.

Students work in pairs. One student is chosen to explain a controversial position to the other. The listener has a simple task: to just listen and provide *positive body language* as feedback. Students take turns as speaker and listener. As simple as this sounds, we know that there are those for whom quietly listening will be a challenge. Those who are unfamiliar with support might need training on just how to say things like “Uh, huh.”

Objective of this activity: After listening to the selected passage, students will accurately summarize and paraphrase its key information.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of a students’ oral and written responses. In the interests of time, you may wish to spot check only students’ written or oral responses. If the spot check reveals weak performance, you may want to do a more thorough review of each student’s written responses.

What you can expect from this activity: In this activity many students will be shocked at the outcome. When a truly attentive listener engages another, the result is almost always extended conversation. Students who have engaged in this activity at our school have reported that they have learned things they never before even suspected. Previously boring friends become interesting, even fascinating. Colleagues at work take on an added dimension. Given the power of conversation, you should warn students to be prepared for sudden revelations. And it is probably a good idea to be prepared to steer the conversation toward safer territory if inappropriate revelations could cause embarrassment.

You also have to watch for other signs to interpret words. Much important meaning is conveyed visually. Finger tapping, a wide-eyed look, a furrowed brow—these mean as much as words do, sometimes more.

A person's posture, for example, can tell you something about his or her attitude. If somebody says, "Well, it doesn't really matter to me," but his or her posture is stiff, knuckles white, eyes intense and forehead damp, clearly he is holding back some true feelings. In such a situation, it's important to make him realize that you want to hear his thoughts, that he has nothing to fear from speaking his mind. A properly worded statement that shows your interest may put him at ease. The ability to create rapport that invites open communication is one of the most valuable skills a manager can possess. (Pollock)

C. Characteristic Communication Style

Approximate class time: 20–30 minutes

A variation of Supportive Listening, but a little more difficult, this activity has its roots in discourse analysis. This activity makes the student pay attention to not only what is being said but how, including nonverbal behavior.

It works like this. In pairs, each student explains a controversial position—ethical issues work well here—relating to the class subject matter. But rather than argue with each other's positions, students are asked to create a theory of communication about their partner's way of talking and listening. Our experience with narrative—i.e., as listeners to stories—teaches us to listen to the voice of the narrator, and we can use our experience to enhance our teaching in this area. For instance, one can ask, does my partner begin with a bold statement of position? Does she use an analogy, or a series of analogies? How does he connect one statement with another? Now, after each has studied the other's pattern, can one partner explain what is the "characteristic communication style" of the other?

Here are some features of a characteristic communication style:

- inner consistency (if statements are inconsistent, honesty is problematic; the narrator may be unreliable)
- honesty and candor
- use of euphemism to avoid difficult realities
- use of metaphor as a clue to thought and theme (the connotations evoked tell us about state of mind, themes, and purpose)
- use of opposites and repetitions, positives and negatives as clues to speaker's value system
- anecdote (storytelling as a clue to character, humor, obsessions)
- bottom line (narrator as literalist, one without imagination, sees things materialistically)
- egocentricity (characters are selfish) vs. concern for others

Objective of this activity: After listening to a speaker, the student will identify and evaluate some features of the speaker's characteristic communication style: purposes, assumptions, and attitudes.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of a student's oral and written responses. Have each partner, in turn, report his or her analysis and have the other comment on the response. In the interests of time in a larger class, you may wish to have only a few teams report.

What you can expect from this activity: This activity requires the ability to form abstract concepts about casual conversations. Students are being asked to both listen and then to categorize what they have listened to. Practice can help in developing that important skill. Also, students might not know the meaning of terms like “metaphor,” “euphemism,” “anecdote,” and others. These categories are crucial to completing the tasks. Simple examples will help; asking students to find examples from the popular press as well as from lyrics or commercials will aid in developing understanding. This activity is one of the more difficult but will lead to increased attentiveness.

“Listeners of both genders can improve the likelihood of understanding their partners by asking questions and by checking their perceptions. The term ‘active listening’ implies that the listening process takes effort and energy. Active listeners participate in a communication encounter both verbally and nonverbally. They may nod their heads, ask for clarification of a point, or paraphrase what they heard to make sure the speaker’s message was correctly interpreted (restating what you hear in your own words is commonly referred to as ‘reflection’). Most important, listeners must try to see the world from the perspective of the person speaking.” (Brownell, 1993)

D. I Know Where You’re Coming From

Approximate class time: 5–10 minutes

This is an especially good activity with nontraditional students. The activity helps students understand differences. In business, school, and personal relations, we meet each other in various venues, most not of our choosing. Needless to say, conversants bring to those venues many pieces of baggage that can interfere with effective communication.

In this activity, students work with partners, and each explains to the other something about the physical surroundings of his or her “home.” The object is to understand something about the person to whom you are listening. If the speaker has just returned from child care, a tough football practice, a troubled dorm room, a tough job site, or a long involved meeting, then the listeners must make allowances. Listeners should encourage material descriptions. An effective listening strategy involves getting a handle on the environment that speakers are “coming from.”

Objectives of this activity: Students will listen critically, assess nonverbal cues in an oral communication, and respond to another in a collaborative and supportive manner.

Evaluation: This activity functions more as an “ice-breaker,” so you may not wish to evaluate it except through informal feedback about how the exercise went. To evaluate more formally, have each partner, in turn, report what was learned and have the other partner confirm or deny the accuracy of the response. In the interests of time in a larger class, you may wish to have only a few teams report.

What you can expect from this activity: The purpose of this activity is to develop empathy as a listener. If done properly the listener can get out of his/her frame of reference and begin to appreciate where another is coming from. By describing the material surroundings of the home or workplace, the speaker is giving clues to how a message should be received. All of us know instinctively to ask if a speaker on a telephone is being overheard, or whether a

conversant is in a hurry. This exercise takes that one step further. In at least one class at our college, each student was asked to bring a picture of his or her workplace, cubicle, desk, or corner office. These pictures said much about how a message might be developed and received.

E. Prediction, Hypothesis-checking, Revising, Generalizing

Approximate class time: 10–15 minutes if teacher verifies the predictions, longer if students listen to a full speech

Listening is closely related to reading. The following activity focuses on predicting, which is a variation of a reading process strategy. The five processes—prediction, hypothesis, checking, revising, generalizing—involve the mental activities that occur when we read or hear.

One way to introduce the concept is to ask students to practice predicting. After you model the process, read the text of the opening paragraph from a news story or magazine article about a relevant course topic and ask students to predict—based on its rhetorical cues of purpose, emphasis, foreshadowing, and transition—what the story or article will be about. In most stories many clues indicate where the story is going, and the student will be able to catch many of them. The teacher then can move from print to oral communication. Have students listen to the opening of a short speech (e.g., from a video of a business leader, motivational speaker, political leader—or you read aloud a speech reprinted in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, which includes many speeches of business leaders) and predict its direction. Then, let students listen to the rest of the speech to check predictions.

Objective of this activity: After listening to a selected passage and analyzing its rhetorical cues, students will accurately predict a communicator’s purposes, assumptions, and attitudes.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of a student’s oral responses. In the interest of time, you may wish to spot check the students’ oral responses. If the spot check reveals weak performance, you may want to check more responses or repeat the exercise.

What you can expect from this activity: Many of us have had friends or colleagues who finish our sentences for us. They know what is coming and can’t refrain from completing the sentence for themselves. With this activity students will practice anticipating a speaker’s logic as well as rhetorical moves. You can count on students having a good deal of previous experience with this concept. Children know how to anticipate parental objections, employees know how a boss will react, co-workers can often role play a colleague’s response to a given directive. With this activity, students are asked to make real this kind of tacit knowledge in a way that will help them deal more effectively with future listening tasks.

F. Chunking and Relating

Approximate class time: 20–30 minutes

Language is made up of lexical items and syntactic features, that is, “things” and “relationship of things.” This activity involves a speaker, a listener, a judge, and a commentator. Prepare a group of “paddles” with these labels: objection, analogy, statistic, contradiction, thesis, support, restatement. Each of these terms refers to a typical item in a

communication situation. As students view or listen to a discussion, one student is chosen as judge to handle the paddles. As the conversation proceeds, the judge holds up the paddle to indicate the item—objection, analogy, statistic, contradiction, thesis, support, or restatement. Other students watch carefully; and after the exercise is over, they analyze the choices made by the judge. This exercise encourages active listening.

Objective of this activity: After listening to a selected passage and analyzing its rhetorical cues, students will accurately predict a communicator’s purposes, assumptions, and attitudes.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of students’ oral responses. In the interest of time, you may wish to spot check the students’ oral responses. If the spot check reveals weak performance, you may want to check more responses or repeat the exercise.

What you can expect from this activity: To some, this activity might seem unnecessarily cumbersome. Using cards or paddles or signs does require some preparation, and conversation moves faster than a person might be able to keep up with. However, the effort is worth it; and once the signs or paddles are created, they can be used in subsequent classes. Most students find the stage business rather comical.

G. You Thought You Were Listening, Didn’t You?

Approximate class time: 8–10 minutes, pausing for laughter and groans

Here’s a quick listening activity that is fun and effective as an activity to get students to listen carefully to what’s being said. It demands attentive listening and a measure of common sense. The concentration that this activity requires is good practice for any problem-solving situation that requires sensitivity and a clear understanding of what is being said.

1. Is there a 4th of July in England? Yes or no?
2. How many birthdays does the average man have?
3. Some months have 31 days. How many have 28?
4. How many outs are there in an inning?
5. Is it legal for a man in California to marry his widow’s sister?
6. A doctor gives you three pills and tells you to take one every half an hour. How long will the pills last?
7. A farmer has 17 sheep. All but 9 of them die. How many sheep are left?
8. How many animals of each sex did Moses bring with him on the ark?
9. A butcher in the market is 5’ 10” tall. What does he weigh?
10. How many 2-cent stamps are there in a dozen?
11. What was the president’s name in 2000?
12. If “Polk” is pronounced “poke” and “folk” is pronounced “foke,” how do you pronounce the white of an egg?

Answers

1. Yes. It comes right after the 3rd.
2. One. You can only be born once.
3. Twelve. All of them have a least 28 days.
4. Six. Don't forget there is a top and a bottom to every inning.
5. No. He must be dead if it is his widow.
6. One hour. If you take the first pill at 1:00, the second at 1:30, and the third at 2:00.
7. Nine. Like I said, all but nine die.
8. None. I didn't know that Moses had an ark.
9. Meat. That is self-explanatory.
10. Twelve. How many eggs are in a dozen? Twelve. It's a dozen.
11. George W. Bush. As far as I know, he hasn't changed his name.
12. Albumen

Objective of this activity: Students will learn to concentrate on what's being said.

Evaluation: None. But note the number who do get the right answers.

What you can expect from this activity: This is a good "ice-breaker" yet with a serious purpose: listening often demands a high level of concentration to comprehend a message accurately.

6. Two Evaluations

Below are two evaluations that can be adapted to more complex assignments.

Basic Listening Comprehension

Conditions: Time, Task, Selection, and Instructions: 20 minutes

Read aloud to the class a previously unread, 150–200 word newspaper or magazine article from *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *Forbes*, or *BusinessWeek* or selection from your business communication text on a topic discussed in the course. Read clearly at a normal rate. Ask each student to paraphrase in writing the main idea presented in the article; note at least two details, such as who, what, when, where, why, or how; and note three key terms from the selection. (*Option:* Instead of reading aloud, you may choose to play an audio tape or a videotape on an issue discussed in the course.)

Option: Have the students respond in memo form as though they were summarizing a meeting discussion for an absent member, who could be their boss.

Competent criteria for task completion include the following:

- Summarizing the main idea of the selection
- Noting two supporting details
- Noting three key terms from the selection

OR

- Asking two questions that address the main topic of the article

Listening to Non-U.S. English Speakers

Certainly one of the most severe obstacles to effective listening arises when one communicator utilizes a variety of English that is different from the other. Many speakers of English possess more than one variety of the language and know how to employ the appropriate variety in a given circumstance. Others, however, possess only their native variety of English. And many speakers of English, especially in the United States of America, a nation of immigrants, speak English as a second language. English has emerged as the almost universal language of business and commerce. In most multi-national organizations, from Ford and GM to the smallest firm with overseas branches, English is the language of choice. Instructors should emphasize to students that the English of world business is not necessarily “American” English. Learning to listen to the many varieties of English is a valuable skill both to an individual employee as well as to the larger organization.

Linguists know that a nonnative speaker might learn vocabulary and grammatical features of a second language almost perfectly. In fact, nonnative speakers of English often have a more profound and insightful grasp of grammatical issues than native speakers. This is simply the result of the fact that native speakers never really “learn” their language but rather they grow into it, much as a child acquires the ability to walk. Second language learners most often learn something of the “theory” of the language they are learning. Vocabulary and grammar can be learned, but an accent influenced by a speaker’s native language is almost impossible to eradicate. Many nonnative speakers of English speak an articulate, insightful, and complex variety of English, but their speech still has remnants of their native language because their mouths and tongues have never quite mastered the oral gymnastics necessary to speak “perfect” American or British English.

Objective: To enhance listening skills through exposing students to a wide variety of different “Englishes” in a thoughtful, reflective, linguistically-aware context.

Preparation: The instructor will need adequate understanding of the vowels and consonants and inflection pattern of English. Phonetic background is helpful but the pronunciation key from any good dictionary is sufficient to complete the assignment. *The American Heritage Dictionary* has an excellent pronunciation key. The *AHD* is available on an inexpensive CD with a short pronunciation screen where students can hear the troublesome vowels of English. For instructors and students who take an interest in this language issue, we would suggest “The Human Languages Page” at <http://www.june29.com/HLP/>. This page is a gateway to many wonderful language resources.

As instructors and students will see as they examine the table of English speech sounds, English and all other languages are composed of vowel and consonant sounds, with a small selection of hybrid sounds, like the “l,” “r,” “y,” and “w” sounds. There are approximately 14 vowel sounds and 26 consonant sounds. Different languages have different numbers of phonetic building blocks and often languages have sounds that do not appear in English. Most classrooms will have a few nonnative speakers and the instructor should call on these valuable resource speakers to help make the learning more real. We would suggest that the class practice English vowels and consonants to become more aware of their sound and shape.

Conditions: Task, Time, Selection, Instructions: 30 minutes. The instructor will present a video, audio tape, or person speaking a nonnative variety of English. The classroom must be sufficiently quiet and the quality of the performance must be sufficiently excellent so that students can “listen” to the nuances of speech. The instructor should structure the performance so that there is “real” content as well as a wide variety of nonstandard sounds. After the performance, the instructor asks students to note in written form observations about what they have heard. By keeping a phonetic chart handy, with vowels and consonants plainly visible, most students will be able to identify differences in pronunciation. With input from all listeners, the class will be able to create a short guide describing similarities and differences between the variety of English they have heard and their own variety or varieties.

The instructor should also ask the listeners to record the content of the presentation. Most likely, there will be mishearings motivated by nonstandard pronunciation. Again, students with experience in cross-cultural communication will have much to add to the discussion.

If time and interest allow, students can interview colleagues or friends who speak English as a nonnative language and create a guide to understanding such speakers. In addition to the phonetic issues, interviewers can include grammatical issues questioning forms, pluralization methods, gender considerations, speaking distances and other aspects of that language community. Language is a good way to enter into the world of the nonnative speaker, a world increasingly more important to American business.

What you can expect from this activity: Cross-cultural communication discussions always provoke insight and interest. Business people love to relate their favorite miscommunication episodes. And the stories we have heard are instructive as well as extremely humorous. Employees who work with telephones will be able to relate the particular problems of “voice only” communication.

Issues of correctness and quality will no doubt arise during the discussion. Obviously language issues are problematic; countries have fought for linguistic independence, citizens have been harassed and discriminated against because of language difference, and the issue of “Black English” and “Second language instruction” animates the education community. We would emphasize that these are political issues more than linguistic ones.

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Another valuable resource is the International Listening Association. The International Listening Association promotes the study, development, and teaching of listening and the practice of effective listening skills and techniques. Web Site: <http://www.listen.org/>

The ILA Bibliography, 2nd edition, with more than 1,250 entries, is available in a printed version. Information is available at the ILA web site.



PROCEDURES FOR TEACHING FORMAL REPORTS

by

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In a meeting of business and technical communication instructors at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the following question was raised: “Do we need to teach the long report?” The question was tabled for further review. But my answer to the question is an unequivocal “yes.” The formal report is, in my view, one of the most valuable learning experiences students of business communication come away from the course with. It helps students to hone their skills in managing a large project, researching, designing documents, and writing. That said, teaching the formal report from process to product is difficult; for instance, the process involves a considerable investment of time by instructors—both in and out of the classroom. Moreover, because most students have not had to undertake such a project, it can be frustrating—for both students and instructors. Yet despite those drawbacks, I think the advantages for students far outweigh the disadvantages. In what follows, I will discuss, step by step, how I guide students through the formal report project.

Unlike many business communication instructors, I require each student to complete the formal report project individually. Additionally, students are allowed to choose from a list of topics broken down into majors and/or areas of specialization; or, they may choose an analytical topic (yardstick, feasibility, justification/recommendation) from Chapters 12, 13, or 14 of *BC:PP*. If students do not wish to choose one of these topics, and decide they would like to develop one on their own, then they must first meet with me in person to discuss their proposed topic. My reason for choosing this route is based more on the realities of an urban commuter university than any theoretical position; however, I do believe that it gives all students a chance to learn from the process directly, even if the final product doesn’t turn out as expected.

Preliminaries

I begin my discussion of the formal report project the very first day of class. I first point out to students that, because the project constitutes 25 percent of their final grade, they should begin thinking about it immediately. Then, I direct them to the three pages of the syllabus (on color-coded paper so they stand out) devoted to the following: (1) a set of detailed instructions for the project proposal assignment, which is students’ first formal presentation of their chosen topic and preliminary research; (2) a set of detailed instructions for the formal report project itself, including the due date; and (3) a short list of possible topics from which to choose—in order for students to get a sense of the types of topics that are acceptable. (I also provide an electronic copy of the list and the syllabus on a course Web site) At this time I also inform students to check out one—or both—of the sample student reports on reserve at the university’s library. Both reports were written by students who took my course in previous semesters, and both received an “A.” These models give students a tangible example of what is expected of them and what students like them are capable of producing. After this, I encourage students to talk to me about their projects. I tell them how important communicating with me will be if their project is to be

successful. And it's true. I can't stress enough how important it is to talk to students about this project. Face-to-face communication often alleviates potential problems in the future.

Before the first formal project related assignment (the proposal) is due, once or twice a week I will remind or ask students about their projects. At first, I'll make light of my reminders; as the semester draws on, though, I tend to make these reminders more serious. As I tell students: "Even if you spend 15 minutes to a half an hour a week doing preliminary research for this project, you will be in good shape when we begin the textbook coverage of formal reports." I find that it's very necessary to keep reminding students about the project, as they have other classes, papers, and projects to worry about.

Students generally begin making appointments to see me after the first four weeks of the semester. Others, however, need to be politely reminded. When students meet with me to present their topic ideas, I often ask a number of questions: "Why did you choose this topic?" or "Why is this topic meaningful or important to you?" or "How does this topic relate to your future career?" These are important questions because, believe it or not, even business-oriented students often have a tendency to choose topics that seem more geared toward research papers than formal reports. Or, they may look back on an English composition class and assume that, because it's an English course, the same kind of approach is expected. For whatever reason, these one-on-one sessions allow me to steer students in the right direction. I tell them, for instance, how important it is that they think of the report as being based upon a specific problem a business or organization is trying to solve. I explain that this is what business reports do: they solve problems or answer questions with a specific goal in mind.

Another common problem is objectivity. Often, students will have preconceived notions about how the report will pan out in the end. Or, in a case where a student has chosen to do a report on an on-the-job problem, often the student is clearly on one side of the issue and is emotionally invested. In these cases, I remind students that in most reports (at least, in my opinion, the most effective reports) writers should strive to be as objective and balanced as possible. They need to understand that their audience(s) will probably not look favorably on a report that, say, stresses only the benefits of a specific course of action.

In-Class Assignments and Discussion

Class discussion of the formal report project begins with students reading Chapter 11 of *BC:PP*. Two weeks are spent on this chapter alone because it helps to build a solid foundation for the rest of the report-writing process.

Project Proposal

The first formal report assignment students must complete is the project proposal, which allows students to demonstrate many of the skills learned in Chapter 11. This is a very detailed assignment, but it's an important one because it requires students to put their ideas on paper and begin thinking conscientiously about the project. In class, the first thing I do is "walk through" the assignment with the students. The proposal consists of two parts: an overview and preliminary research.

In the “Overview” section of the proposal, students are asked to explain the following:

1. Essential background information about the topic.
2. Purpose of the report, including an implicit—or explicit—problem question.
3. Audience(s) for the report (both primary and secondary).

In class, I tell students (and show them) that I will be asking the following questions about their report topics when I read the “Overview.”

- Will the topic you’ve chosen be interesting or useful to you outside of the context of this course?
- Is the topic centered in a business or organizational context? Even if the topic is based on a “fictional” premise, could the report be generated in a “real life” business or organization?
- Will the topic ensure that there is going to be enough primary or secondary information or data to meet the report’s page requirement?
- Will the topic require analysis?

In the “Preliminary Research” section of the proposal, students are asked to consider possible primary and secondary sources. For primary sources, students must locate two “experts” in their research areas. Then, they must record these experts’ contact information and explain why each expert would be an appropriate source of information for their reports. Additionally, students are asked to consider two more ways of collecting primary data (other than interviews) and explain why these methods might contribute to their reports.

For secondary sources, students are asked to locate and present the following information using the MLA style: (1) a newspaper article, (2) two journal or magazine articles or abstracts, and (3) three Web sites, or Web-generated documents. Students are advised to use the databases available at the university’s library, and they are also required to explain briefly how the sources they’ve found might contribute to their reports.

In discussing this part of the assignment, I show the students how to access the library’s databases, and I do a practice search so they can see how to do it themselves.

While the benefits of this assignment are immense, students really struggle with it. Consequently, I allow enough time in class for students to ask questions about researching, presentation, etc. If all goes as planned, most students are able to use the overview information for the report’s introduction (with some revision), and most use a good portion of their preliminary research materials.

On the day the assignment is due, I ask for volunteers to discuss their proposals. This discussion is probably one of the most fruitful of the semester for students. We take a “workshopping” approach to the discussion: I encourage students to ask questions about the report’s purpose and audience; then, I ask students if they have any advice about research sources or how the report might be organized. As is often the case, many students will be doing similar reports, so this

open forum is really a great chance for all of us to share ideas. In addition, I encourage students to use the course reflector I set up to solicit advice and share information. It's important, too, to thank student volunteers for sharing their ideas.

Work Plan

After I've returned their proposals to them, with advice about refining their topics, I then help students to prepare a work plan for the project. First, we look at sample work plans and discuss how they are organized and presented, and determine what their purposes are. Students almost always focus on the schedule; I in turn try to get them to focus on the purpose statement and the tentative outline. I tell them that these elements of the work plan, along with the sources and methods section, eventually will be a part of their reports. In other words, the more time spent on these things now will mean less time spent on these things when writing the report. Then, I have teams complete a case study or activity from Chapter 12 of *BC:PP* that requires them to complete a work plan. This is done so that students get practice before doing the "real thing." For comparison, I also provide them with a possible solution to the work plan on which they've been working. Having students complete the work plan also allows them, if necessary, to re-present their topics to me. It also gives me the opportunity to give them advice about organization, which, for many students, is a difficult aspect of composing the report.

Organization and Visual Aids

I try to combine these two difficult and time-consuming parts of the report project through a series of assignments taken from *BC:PP*, Chapters 12, 13, and 14. Consequently, each assignment not only requires students to evaluate, organize, and present data or information, but also to draw conclusions—and perhaps offer recommendations—based upon an analysis of the audience and purpose. All of these assignments are completed in the computer lab. This is important—and necessary—so that I have the opportunity to help students create visual aids. After every assignment is completed, we discuss possible ways of presenting data or information, and discuss possible conclusions and/or recommendations. I also spend two weeks on this part of the process.

Because choosing visual aids is a stumbling block for many students, I also assign a variation of Activity 12.14 from *BC:PP*. Instead of having students choose five visual aids, for example, I ask them to choose three. In class, after I've discussed the various forms and functions of different visual aids, we then discuss this assignment itself. I first encourage students to take a "yardstick" approach to evaluating the visuals they will choose. Then, we discuss possible criteria for evaluating visual aids based on my previous discussion. By the time we've finished, students have usually come up with several criteria, so I ask them to use three or four in their assignment. This assignment is valuable because it helps students to become more aware about how visuals are used, and it also helps them to think about how their own reports will be put together.

Documentation

Experience has taught me that this is also an aspect of the report project that needs to be emphasized. Too often in the past I've seen examples of what could be considered plagiarism because I assumed students had learned proper documentation, citation, etc., in previous courses. To rectify this problem, I spend most of an entire 50-minute class period explaining the finer points of documentation. Surprisingly, business students are generally interested in these details.

In the computer lab, students are given random portions of articles from recent publications. Then, they are required to do the following:

- Present the publication information (MLA style).
- Provide long, full-sentence, and partial phrase quotations from the source.
- Paraphrase a paragraph from the source.

After the assignment is completed, as a class, we look at possible correct and incorrect examples. It's imperative to show students an example of a paraphrased source that "crosses the line," and make it clear to them that this is plagiarism. I've found that spending this time in class is well worth the effort. I've had fewer and fewer problems with documentation since I began doing this.

Putting It All Together: Completing the Project

Although the syllabus contains detailed instructions for putting the report project together, I revisit it in class. I point out especially the submission requirements, and what must be included in the project packet. Of these, two are essential: (1) photocopies or originals of sources, and (2) a "dirty" rough draft of the report. I emphasize how important these items are for me to evaluate their projects fairly.

The final week of the course is spent "workshopping" drafts of the project. Aside from getting advice from their peers, I tell students that they must have specific questions in mind before coming to talk to me about their projects. Moreover, I extend my office hours the final week, encouraging students to come to me with questions about their reports. Because this is such a stressful time for them anyway, I go out of my way to be positive, patient, and understanding. I try to emphasize all of the hard work they've done already, and remind them about how much they have learned not only about researching, writing, and document design, but also about themselves. One week later, I get ready to read.

A list of possible report topics is available on the next pages and also at the Guffey Student Web Site at <http://guffey.swlearning.com>.



BUSINESS REPORT TOPICS

Students may choose an appropriate topic from the list provided here and at the student Web site. Topics are grouped in categories related to students' major courses of study: accounting, finance, human resources, marketing, information systems, management, and general business/education/campus issues. Students may gather information for reports on many of these topics by using InfoTrac and by using the Web generally. All the topics are appropriate for business proposals, business plans, and formal reports.

ACCOUNTING

1. After the corporate scandals of the early 2000s, Congress passed legislation that it hoped would renew faith in the accounting profession. Study the laws that were passed and examine the effects of those laws. Why were they passed? How has the accounting profession changed as a result of the laws? What conclusions can you draw from your findings? What recommendations can you make to accounting educators regarding programs that train accountants?
2. "Campus Castoffs" is a fund-raising program that has worked in a number of college campuses. It involves gathering clothes, computers, furniture, and other unwanted items prior to graduation. On some campuses as much as 40 tons of waste have been turned into large cash donations. Assume that you are part of a campus team investigating the possibility of a "Trash to Treasure" sale in May. Analyze the financial aspects of gathering castoffs, organizing a sale, pricing the goods, and keeping track of the income that will become a gift to your campus student organization or to a charity your team names.
3. You have started a bookkeeping/accounting service, and you would like to offer your services to Company X (a local business of your choice). You are trained to do some or all of the following: income tax preparation and planning; auditing and financial reporting; retirement, estate, and financial planning; computer consulting, system design, installation, and staff training; business consulting; recordkeeping and banking. You will even prepare business plans for start-up companies. Write a proposal that will get you the business of Company X.
4. Assume you are working for a company that is considering opening a business in another country. Analyze possible accounting problems the company might encounter and offer possible solutions for overcoming these problems.
5. Your company's managers have been thinking about purchasing software that will help it track revenue transactions involving payouts to several parties. Find out what kind of software is available, develop criteria for evaluating the options you find, and offer your managers recommendations. In other words, is it worth it to purchase this type of software at all? If so, which is the best choice?
6. Analyze the effects recent congressional tax laws will have on either businesses or the general population. What will be the advantages and/or disadvantages of these laws? What

recommendations can you offer to your chosen audience to take advantage of these changes? Or, what must your audience do to avoid being negatively affected by these changes?

7. Your company has decided to revise this year's annual corporate report to shareholders. Choose two or three recent annual shareholders' reports and analyze them in terms of their audience, purpose, content, and design. Then, offer specific recommendations for revision.
8. As the leader of your accounting department's internship program, you have been asked to assess the top three or four internships in your area. Since this report is for students, you'll need to consider what criteria they think are important for an internship. If you live in an area with a "big four" firm, you might also want to consider including it for comparison. If you believe it's appropriate, offer recommendations.
9. You have been asked by a new Web start-up company to help them decide the best form of business organization. This new enterprise involves two married women. Should they incorporate, consider a limited liability arrangement, or a partnership? What effect would each have on their income taxes? Advise them on the best choice, given their circumstances.

FINANCE

1. Does a relationship exist between success in big-time sports and the amount of alumni donations to a college? Does success in big-time sports positively affect the quality of applicants to a college? Assume that the athletic department of College X claims that if it is granted significant financial support, it will produce successful teams. In turn, those successful athletic teams will pull in larger alumni contributions and will also attract higher-quality students. As a research consultant, you have been asked to study the issue. Do any studies exist that show the effects of successful teams? Based on your findings, make a recommendation to the administration of College X regarding the funding request from its athletic department.
2. A frequent topic in business is the issue of CEO compensation. Critics complain that CEO salaries have become exorbitant and should be capped. Is it unethical for executive salaries to exceed, let's say, 24 times the average wage of employees? Should executive pay be tied to an organization's profits? Select a large public company for which salary data are available. As a member of a stockholder watchdog group, you have been asked to examine its executive salaries and report to the group, which thinks salaries are excessive. What conclusions would you draw, and what recommendations would you make to stockholders?
3. In a meeting, managers and supervisors for the bank where you work expressed concerns about employees' customer-service skills. Moreover, they wonder whether a specific set of procedures should be established — especially for new employees. They have asked you to investigate the customer service practices at other local banks to determine what skills should be emphasized and what procedures — if any — should be adopted.
4. Your business is considering offering child-care and/or elder-care benefits to its employees. Assess the financial pros and cons of either type of benefit, and offer recommendations.

5. You work for a corporation whose industry is in the midst of a massive consolidation. Your corporation has recently been named as a probable target for a takeover. How should management prepare for this possibility? Should it bide its time and wait for a potential buyer? Or, should it become more aggressive by making additional acquisitions?
6. Recently, determining the financial worth of a company has become problematic. Should the value of a company be determined by its potential sale price in the short term? Or should a company's value be determined by more traditional means, such as its business model, the value it's creating, and its management's maturity and ability to grow as the business evolves? Evaluate the pros and cons of these choices and offer recommendations.
7. Many banks are facing increasing competition from online services and cellular phone companies. These new companies are offering consumers and merchants an alternative to processing customer-purchase payments, for which banks traditionally have charged a fee. Investigate how this trend will affect traditional banking practices in the future. How will banks cope with these changes and retain customers?
8. At your last school-sponsored investment club meeting, many were enthusiastic about online trading. You aren't so sure. As a result, you decide to evaluate the benefits and possible costs of online trading in order to present to your investment club an objective assessment of the idea.
9. Your investment club has decided it will go ahead with its decision to trade online. You are part of a team that must recommend which online trading site is the best one for your club. To do so, your team must first establish criteria for evaluating possible sites, and then use these criteria for recommending the best site. Compare Web sites of existing online brokers.
10. A fellow student and you think you have a great idea for a Web-based company. Prepare a business plan that will attract the financing you need to get your business started. Since you're not located in Silicon Valley, you need to assess carefully your financing options. Should you try to attract a so-called "Angel," an investment network, or try the local bank? What other financing possibilities are there, and which is the best for your situation?

HUMAN RESOURCES

1. As a newly hired research assistant in the HR department of a large company, you have been asked to determine the best means of hiring and testing new employees. Consider what other companies similar to yours are doing, assess the positives and negatives of each, and offer recommendations to your department.
2. After studying résumés and cover letters in your business communication class and after writing many of your own, you feel that you could help other people with their job-search documents. You would like to start a small company offering résumé-writing services. You will revise existing résumés or write entirely new ones. In addition, you will prepare dynamite cover letters and provide job-search and interviewing tips. But you will need funding to buy the appropriate equipment and get a Web site started. Write a proposal to a

local bank asking for funding to begin this business. Be sure to look at Web sites already offering such services.

3. Because of the tight job market and the difficulty of hiring qualified people, you realize that it's important to sell your company to your own employees. Research has shown that respect and cooperation from coworkers and managers, compensation, and other rewards, help to retain good employees. What it boils down to is promoting your company from within. What are other companies doing to self-promote? Based on an analysis of what other companies are doing, offer recommendations to managers of your company
4. Because you feel you could be more productive working at home than in the office, you prepare a proposal that would allow you to telecommute. Because no one in your company has yet been allowed to telecommute, you decide to suggest a telecommuting pilot program. Naturally, guidelines, rules, and expectations will have to be established. Volunteer to help to develop them. Be sure to cite all the benefits to the employer. Numerous online articles are available to provide ammunition. Prepare a schedule explaining exactly what days you would work at home. Instead of discussing staffing, discuss your work space, explaining what you have done to make telecommuting succeed. Instead of discussing budget, you might include a section on costs. If you need the company to provide you with equipment, spell it out. Be aware, though, that your proposal is likely to be more successful if you can do your at-home work without costing the company much.
5. Your company's managers haven't been satisfied lately with the quality of some new employees. They believe that the hiring process may be the reason, and they've asked the HR department to recommend a set of criteria for cover letters and résumés. You have been chosen for the job. You will accomplish this through interviews with and surveys of recruiters from companies similar to yours.
6. Like you, many students aren't sure what recruiters look for in cover letters and résumés. Additionally, how are Web-based and e-mail versions of these documents different from hard-copy versions? Is a résumé that can be scanned the same as a Web-based version? Is it wise to send your résumé as an attachment? Your job is to sort through the confusion and present a report that examines these issues and gives your fellow students some advice about what to do.
7. While it's not a topic many employees feel comfortable discussing, the issue of drug and alcohol abuse needs to be addressed, according to the manager of your human resources department. She has chosen you to assess what other companies are doing about employees suffering from drug or alcohol abuse. She wants to know what approaches these companies are taking and what programs they offer. She also wants you to recommend a reasonable policy.
8. The business for which you work has an outdated code of ethics in its policy manual. Because of the ever-changing nature of businesses today and growing diversity in the workforce, you have been asked to help to update the company's code of ethics. To do this, you consider analyzing other companies' codes of ethics to determine what your policy

should include—and what it shouldn't. Based on your analysis, you will offer recommendations to your management team.

9. Because statistics show that the U.S. population is aging (i.e., baby boomers are nearing retirement), you have been asked to review retirement packages in companies similar to yours. Should your company be aware of any trends? Are future retirees going to demand more? Your goal is to determine what general retirement policies your company should adopt.
10. Like any good new employee, you read your company's employee handbook carefully and conscientiously. After having worked for the company for six months, though, you discover numerous discrepancies between the handbook's rules/regulations and what actually takes place on the job. Additionally, the handbook is woefully outdated. You politely bring this to your manager's attention, and he agrees. In fact, he decides that you should investigate other companies' handbooks to determine what changes should be made.
11. Your boss can't understand why so many ex-employees have filed unemployment claims against the company lately. He asks you, the HR manager, to develop a procedure for reprimanding and, yes, firing employees. You decide to investigate other companies' procedures to determine what your company should do.
12. Is a lack of properly trained and qualified employees a problem in your area? If so, what are businesses doing to attract and keep prospective employees? After you've analyzed the major trends, take the positions of a personnel manager who must report on them and recommend strategies.
13. Many Web-based employment sites have sprung up on the Internet. At first, your boss was not convinced that using these sites would benefit the company. She's asked you to write a report that not only convinces her that these sites would be beneficial, but also recommends the best site(s) for your company to find potential new employees.
14. Prepare a business plan proposal for a seminar or training program that could be offered to companies or individuals. Consider the following seminar ideas: "Dress for Success," "Team Building," "Solving People Problems at Work," "Making Every Message Count," "Building Confidence with Grammar," "Harness the Power of Your Computer," "Communication Strategies," and "Contemporary Business Etiquette."
15. At a recent meeting, managers and supervisors for the bank where you work expressed concerns about employees' customer-service skills. Moreover, they wonder whether a specific set of procedures should be established — especially for new employees. They have asked you to investigate the customer service practices at other local banks to determine what skills should be emphasized and what procedures — if any — should be adopted.
16. Your business is considering offering child-care and/or elder-care benefits to its employees. Assess the financial pros and cons of either type of benefit, and offer recommendations.

17. The management council at MegaTech is considering adding a diversity training program. You have been asked to prepare a report that evaluates three programs offering services on the Web. MegaTech is most interested in planning, designing, and implementing organization-wide diversity and gender equity (sexual harassment prevention) programs. What organizations offer services and how do they compare? Draw conclusions and make recommendations to MegaTech.
18. From news stories, locate a company that you think might need a diversity training program. Then, investigate Web sites of diversity training services. Select one. Drawing on the information from that program, prepare a proposal to the target company. Use your imagination for some of the information. Your unsolicited proposal should describe the company's problem and explain how your program can help reduce or solve the company's diversity problems.
19. The CEO of the large organization where you are a manager has heard that several of your competitors have installed electronic auditing procedures to monitor the computer use of employees. The CEO asks you, as manager of human resources, to investigate this trend. Why are other companies doing this? Should your organization do likewise? Will employees consider this an invasion of their privacy? What would be the advantages and disadvantages to instituting an employee monitoring system? Based on your discussion, what conclusions could be drawn? Make recommendations to the CEO. Use your imagination to fill in details about your organization.

MARKETING

1. Trends in customer service are changing. Many corporations are making personalized customer service an important part of their image. As a marketing intern for a well-known national chain, you have been asked to evaluate these trends. What do customers today expect? How are other national chains capitalizing on these trends? In addition to evaluating the trends, offer recommendations to the company.
2. Gap is the largest specialty-apparel retailer in the United States. Fighting a "sweatshop" image, Gap studied the working conditions in the hundreds of factories seeking to win Gap contracts. Instead of being on the defensive, Gap reported that 90 percent of its suppliers failed to meet its initial evaluation. As an intern at Wal-Mart, you have been given an assignment to study Gap's report and its strategy in deflecting criticism of working conditions. Wal-Mart suffered in the 1990s when its celebrity endorser, Kathie Lee Gifford, was criticized over working conditions in the foreign plants making her clothing line. Study Gap's strategy, its reporting, and its policies regarding social responsibility. What are the advantages and disadvantages in terms of marketing? Would you recommend such a strategy for Wal-Mart?
3. As an administrative assistant in the marketing division of a large company, you have been "volunteered" to take over travel arrangements for employees on site and in regional branches of the company. Every reservation requires many telephone calls and countless e-mails back and forth. You would like to use the Internet to access company profiles and schedule trips immediately. Your boss agrees with you, but the vice president doesn't like the

idea of online travel reservations. Your boss gives you permission to do the research necessary to submit a report proving that online reservations can save the company time and money. Submit either a proposal or a report outlining the advantages and disadvantages of online travel reservations.

4. Knowing you've just graduated from college with a degree in marketing, a family located in your hometown asks you to investigate the pros and cons of franchising their business. They want to know what the financial and legal implications would be. Of three locations of your choice, which is the best for a new McDonald's (or Dairy Queen, Subway, Blimpie, or franchise of your choice)?
5. *U.S. News & World Report* states that more than 90 percent of the products advertised on children's television are high in fat, sugar, or salt. As an intern at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, you have been asked to complete your own independent study of children's programs. Your objective is to confirm or refute the contention that 90 percent of the food products advertised are not nutritious. Decide on the scope of your study. Do you want to limit your study to Saturday morning programs? Based on your findings, what conclusions can you draw? Do you want to relate your study to the huge increase in childhood obesity in this country and abroad? Make recommendations that are appropriate for a center devoted to public interest issues.
6. What recent advertising campaign on a national level has been a failure? What campaigns have been tremendously successful? Select one or the other, analyze why the campaign failed or succeeded, and offer recommendations to other marketers.
7. Are rebates successful? Your job, as the marketing director for a newly formed company, is to evaluate how successful rebates are. What are their advantages and disadvantages to both the company and the customer? Prepare a report to the CEO.
8. Your company has a fairly large number of salespeople. However, management isn't satisfied with the way individual salespeople are being evaluated. One controversial method that has been used is to tape sales transactions. Management finds this intriguing, but you're not sure. What other methods are used? Select companies similar to yours to determine what's being done. What are the pros and cons of each? Which one, in your view, is the best for your company?
9. Sales have been slumping a bit at your small company, and the boss wants to determine whether the company's advertising is responsible. She wants you to evaluate your advertising campaign, but you're not sure where to begin. You decide it would be best to start by analyzing the approaches of companies similar to yours. What works, what doesn't? Are there trends that you're not aware of? Make recommendations to your boss.
10. You have been asked to conduct a market study of your city (or another, if you choose) to determine the best location for a given business (your choice). The company requesting this study wants basic demographic information (e.g., population, income, age, traffic flow, etc.) to be used as the basis for your recommendation.

11. A large chain where you work has decided to build its new store on a property in your city that is environmentally sensitive. Moreover, many in the neighborhood surrounding the property are firmly opposed to the new store. As marketing director, you must make this transition go smoothly for everyone involved. Your job is to map out an approach and offer specific recommendations.
12. E-mail marketing is cheap and fast. But most consumers hate receiving “spam.” Your boss can’t decide whether to use direct-mail advertising or e-mail messages to boost your company’s sales. He asks you to assess the pros and cons of each from the standpoint of the customer and the company. He’s particularly interested in the legal liabilities associated with each one. Ultimately, he wants you to decide which one is better.
13. Because it has seen such a tremendous amount of growth in recent years, the company for which you work is faced with the following dilemma: should it establish an in-house advertising department or use an agency? This is all new to you, so you begin by investigating what other businesses in similar situations have done. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which is the better choice for your company?
14. Given the fact that a brand name can be worth almost half of a company’s value (e.g., the Coca-Cola brand), the effective use of brands is extremely important. As Andrea Dunham of Unique Value International puts it, the reliability associated with a brand becomes “a repository of knowledge about the things that people are going to buy or use” (*U. S. News & World Report*, 9 October 2000). What are some do’s and don’ts as far as brand maintenance goes? From a marketing standpoint, what should companies do to ensure that their brands are effective?
15. Your small company has decided to begin advertising on the Web. You’re concerned, however, so you decide to investigate the important similarities and differences between Web and print advertising in terms of content, design, and — most importantly — cost. Your task ultimately will be to develop specific criteria for each type of advertising and to decide when each is appropriate.
16. You have been asked by a new Web start-up company to help it decide the best way to market its product. While advertising on the Web is certainly one option, the company’s partners want to know about alternatives like the local newspaper, magazines, and even the local business-to-business directory. Certainly, cost is an issue; but the main concern is getting the best exposure for a reasonable price.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. A large successful company (your choice) has asked you to submit a proposal to help it develop e-mail, cell phone, and instant messaging policies for its employees. As an MIS (management information systems) or human resources consultant (your choice), you know how dangerous it is for an organization to operate without such policies. Use your imagination in establishing the problem for Company X. Explain why precise policies are extremely important. Indicate how you will solve the problem by gathering key employees, as well as technical experts, lawyers, and management, in the process of formulating specific

policies for Company X. Develop a proposal, identify your staff, and submit a budget for your consulting company to establish e-mail, cell phone, and instant messaging policies for Company X.

2. A trade group of mid-sized businesses has hired you to prepare a report as well as an oral presentation regarding issues related to installing Wi-Fi networking. What is it, how is it used, where is it most appropriate, what are its advantages and disadvantages, and what recommendations can you make to businesses considering installing it?
3. Although many of the salespeople who work in your company use laptops, they've asked you to investigate the benefits of Web-accessible cell phones. Salespeople contend that the portability of these phones, in addition to their ability to access the Web, makes them an ideal sales tool. After you investigate the benefits of these phones, you decide to compare the top three or four phones offered using the following criteria: price, network, band/mode, weight/size, screen size, battery life, ringer options, and extras included. Which phone would be best for your salespeople?
4. Your company has undertaken the arduous task of converting its administrative operations from a manual to a computerized system. You have been chosen to develop a plan for making this transition. What issues need to be considered? Are there conversion programs that will help the transition process go smoothly? What have other businesses done? Offer specific recommendations.
5. Should companies lease or buy computer equipment today? What kinds of questions should companies ask themselves when making a decision about leasing or buying? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option? Make recommendations.
6. Should Company X (your choice) consider offshoring one of its operations, such as call center or tech support? As a consultant, you have been asked to research the pros and cons of outsourcing and offshoring.
7. Your department (your choice) has decided it needs a software package to streamline its operations (your choice). Using a set of select criteria, evaluate three or four choices of software for your department, and offer recommendations.
8. Many students like you are contemplating systems' certification beyond the undergraduate degree. What are the most popular and useful certification programs available? Is certification worth the effort? What programs would you recommend? Why?
9. The computer lab manager in your business school has chosen you to write a report that assesses the pros and cons of a Unix-based versus an NT-based networking system. Besides the costs involved, she wants you to look at compatibility issues, long-term trends, training provided, and usability. She also wants you to recommend the best system for the lab's needs.
10. A popular trend in today's workplace is "telecommuting." Your boss has had several employees ask her about the possibility of performing work — at least part time — at home. Your boss isn't convinced that telecommuting is in her best interest, so she asks you to write

a report that analyzes the pros and cons of this form of employment. Consider what jobs are ideal for telecommuting, what the employment statistics reveal, and how it affects both businesses and employees.

11. The company for which you work has a Web presence and is considering whether going “paperless” is the next logical step. In other words, how would a company-wide intranet solve this problem? What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of such a system? How would employees respond to communicating only electronically? Is security a problem? Offer recommendations.
12. Many students majoring in management information systems (MIS) wonder whether basic writing skills will be an important aspect of their jobs. You’re curious, too, so you decide to write a report that investigates what MIS jobs involve. In addition, you wonder whether the course requirements in your business school serve to prepare MIS majors for the kinds of on-the-job writing they will do. After you’ve researched and analyzed these issues, offer recommendations to fellow students.
13. Your college has decided to offer each student the opportunity to establish a Web presence on its server through a personal home page. As the head of media and information technologies, it’s your job to develop clear and understandable directions for students who want to create their own Web sites — whether they use HTML or any of the popular Web-page-creation software programs. After carefully analyzing your audience’s needs and investigating your college’s regulations about content and security, present students with a set of directions.

MANAGEMENT

1. Many companies are touting the benefits of various forms of employee participation in management decisions. An example of this is self-managed project teams. You’ve been asked to investigate the most popular methods. What criteria should be established to evaluate these methods? After you’ve evaluated each method, provide your recommendation for the best one.
2. A *U. S. News & World Report* article described disabled workers as “[t]he overlooked labor force.” Given the need for skilled knowledge workers, examine the advantages and disadvantages of hiring disabled employees. Offer recommendations.
3. Your company is opening a branch in another country (your choice). You’ve been asked to review and analyze what other companies have done to prepare their managers for such a move. In addition, you must come up with a detailed plan for selecting and training these managers.
4. You are part of a corporate management team that is discussing Bob Heller’s promotion to the head of new division. Bob has been a loyal employee, working his way up through the corporate ranks. The team feels strongly about this candidate, but it realizes that he does have potential weaknesses. Because the team wants Bob to succeed, it asks you to investigate firms like the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, NC, and Personnel Decisions International in Minneapolis, which offer training programs for up-and-coming managers.

Evaluate the services offered by these — or other — management-skills services to determine which one would best serve Bob’s needs. Offer recommendations.

5. Numerous articles suggest that company wellness plans cut firms’ healthcare costs. You’re intrigued, but not totally sold. Surely these plans must have disadvantages as well. You decide to investigate the advantages *and* disadvantages of wellness plans. It might help to get a sense of how rank-and-file employees feel about these plans as well as reviewing the published materials. Do the advantages really outweigh the disadvantages?
6. You run a small business, and you’ve been hearing a lot about the importance of “personalized customer service.” You’re not sure what this means, or whether it will increase your business, but you want to find out more. First, what is personalized customer service? How do other businesses provide this? How have other businesses profited from this? Are there hidden costs? In a nutshell, is it worth it?
7. As manager of a midsized company, you’ve been asked by the management council to justify the installation of a Wi-Fi network for your company. They are most concerned with security. Without getting into the technology aspects, write a report that convinces your management council that Wi-Fi networks can be secure.
8. In a recent meeting, managers and supervisors for the company (your choice) where you work expressed concerns about employees’ customer-service skills. Moreover, they wondered whether a specific set of procedures should be established — especially for new employees. They have asked you to investigate the customer service practices at other companies like yours to determine what skills should be emphasized and what procedures — if any — should be adopted.
9. As a manager in a company with many employees using computers, you’re fed up with the Windows operating systems. You’re no techie, but you do know that Linux, an inexpensive operating system, is being talked up as competition for the notoriously buggy Microsoft Windows. Your friend, the CEO, said that if you could justify a switch from Windows to Linux, he might consider it. Prepare a report that compares Windows and Linux operating systems. What are the pros and cons of switching a business operation to a Linux system? Gather data, draw conclusions, and make recommendations to the CEO.
10. Discuss and analyze the future of the PC. What significant changes, if any, are ahead, and what will businesses need to do to prepare for them?
11. You work for a corporation whose industry is in the midst of a massive consolidation. Your corporation has recently been named as a probable target for a takeover. How should management prepare for this possibility? Should it bide its time and wait for a potential buyer? Or, should it become more aggressive by making additional acquisitions?

GENERAL BUSINESS/EDUCATION/CAMPUS ISSUES

1. Student-run businesses, such as Georgetown Inc., provide part-time help on and off campus. They also help students gain marketable experience. Georgetown Inc. employs 260

undergraduates in operations ranging from a video rental store to a storage agency to a one-hour photo shop. At Harvard, Stanford, and Columbia, students publish travel and other guides to life on and around their campuses. Students research, write, and market the books. At the University of Dayton in Ohio, Dayton Student Agencies runs a campus supermarket and coffee shop. In teams explore the possibility of starting a campus business that employs students in part-time work. Write your report as a feasibility study or a proposal to secure start-up funding.

2. Students have complained recently about the prices of books at the campus bookstore. Many students have mentioned Web-based booksellers as possible alternatives. As a representative of your student government, you've decided to find out what the best alternatives are, and which is the best alternative for students at your school. You decide to compare these alternatives by considering the following: price, availability, book buyback program, and students' thoughts about purchasing books.
3. It is estimated that as many as 70 percent of members of corporate executive offices come up through the ranks of a given company. Yet once these employees become executives, they are often vulnerable to the pitfalls of the upper ranks, and they often aren't prepared. Not every prospective executive has basic management skills in areas such as motivating people, delegating authority, dealing with employee conflicts, and crunching numbers. To deal with this problem, many business schools have begun offering more courses devoted specifically to sharpening personal management skills. Write a report that evaluates how this problem is being addressed in your school of business. You may want to investigate how other business schools have dealt with the problem, what courses they offer, etc. Present your report to the dean of your school of business.
4. Your local United Way needs volunteers for many projects. Volunteer your services (individually or in teams) to help it prepare funding proposals. Contact the local director or head of allocations committee to learn what they are looking for and what problems they face in securing funding.
5. The librarian of your company library needs to add business periodicals to the library subscription list. She is unfamiliar with all specialized magazines and has asked for help from the various company divisions. You've been assigned to recommend four or more print or online periodicals in your particular specialty. In your report describe the readership, the contents, and the scope of each periodical. Inform the librarian about who will use your choices and how your selections benefit your department.
6. A headline from the *Toronto Star* states: "The CEOs Artfully Intervene: Leaders Declare Liberal Arts Studies Must Be Funded for Well-Rounded Professionals." How would the majority of American businesses view this assertion? In other words, is a liberal arts education important in creating successful business employees now and in the future? Are critical thinking and communication skills that important in businesses today? If so, do the requirements at your school or college serve to educate students who will face an increasingly complex work environment? Might you offer recommendations?

7. According to a recent survey of more than 2,300 workers by KPMG LLP, illegal or unethical behavior in the workplace has soared. More than three fourths of those surveyed said they had observed unethical behavior, including deceptive sales practices, unsafe working conditions, mishandling proprietary or confidential information, discrimination, and sexual harassment (Allesandra Losciale, *Newsday*). What are corporations doing to address these issues? Aside from the strict penalties for corporate crime, what effect does ignoring these problems have on employee retention, for example? What can corporations do to ensure an ethical workplace?



TRANSPARENCY PACKET DESCRIPTION

Because I am convinced of the instructional value of visual aids, the transparency packet for the fifth edition of *Business Communication: Process and Product* is very large. Adopters of *BC:PP*, 5e, may order the packet from their sales rep or by calling South-Western at 1-800-423-0563. The transparency masters (not acetates) are also available at the Guffey Instructor's Web site and may be downloaded. By downloading them from the Web site, you receive them quickly and you save the cost of mailing.

To give you the fullest selection of items while keeping the cost manageable, we provide both masters and acetates in the packet. All of the pages have large fonts for superior projection and readability. The packet is arranged in two sections:

Transparency Masters

Numbered from 1 through 127, the masters contain the following:

- **Lecture outlines and review material.** These masters are particularly useful in introducing chapters, reviewing concepts, and highlighting significant points. They are also helpful for note takers and hearing-impaired students.
- **“Before” and “After” examples.** For each letter- and memo-writing chapter, you will find a set of “before” and “after” documents, followed by critical thinking questions to guide discussion. These are excellent for introducing letter strategies and demonstrating distinctive differences between poor and improved writing.

Transparency Acetates

Numbered from 128 through 191, the acetates contain the following:

- **Figures from the text.** These enlarged illustrations enable you to emphasize and explain significant concepts.
- **Bonus figures and lecture-enrichment material.** These acetates illustrate new perspectives and items **not** discussed in the text. Some contain discussion questions that encourage class interaction. Others have accompanying lectures in the Instructor's Manual.

“Before” and “After” Documents

Many instructors have found that before/after documents are extremely effective in capturing the attention of students and in illustrating writing strategies. In this packet you will find a number of before/after examples. However, you can also use as before/after examples the many “Documents for Analysis” that appear in end-of-chapter activities in the textbook. Each one has a solution in the Instructor's Manual. Students read and discuss the “before” example in the book. Then, you show the “after” document, which is a solution from the IM (available as a transparency master).

Tips for Using the Transparency Packet

- **Folder organization.** Because *BC:PP* has such an abundance of transparency ancillaries, we suggest that you start a file folder for each chapter of the book. In it place all the transparency masters and acetates for each chapter from this packet. Then go to the Instructor's Manual and tear out all the perforated transparency masters that are solutions for problems in each chapter. Place them in the proper folder. You will then have a better sense of the total number of ancillaries available to you.
- **Mystery revelation.** Many of the transparencies are very full—and for a reason. We think that single words expressed as bulleted items are generally useless in teaching writing concepts. Thus, we strive to give you guidelines and examples—something to really talk about. To offset the fullness of the screen text, use the “mystery revelation” approach. Don't show the entire transparency at first. Use a sheet to cover everything but the title. Then slowly, with emphasis and mystery, reveal each new idea as you discuss and amplify it.

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